Sunday, January 27, 2008 ★★ Vol. 23 / No. 49

PHILIPPINE Sunday INQUIRER

ENLIGHTENED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

ASEAN ON CENTER STAGE
President Arroyo arrives at the World Economic Forum on Friday for the session entitled "The Emerging Asian Community: The Role of the Asians." In her speech, she called the other Asean leaders to make a difference in the region by getting Burmese pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi released. She's now in Dubai for an investment road show. She's due to return home on Tuesday.

CEOs in Davos cheering RP on

GMA now in Dubai for more of Davos

By TJ Burgonio

DAVOS, SWITZERLAND (VIA PLDT)—PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo left Switzerland for Dubai yesterday heartened by business leaders' positive sentiments about the strong Philippine economy and news of the country's improved credit rating outlook.

"Everyone is very positive about the Philippines. The peso is at an all-time high, and the President and her economic team have turned everything around," Citigroup and Citibank chair William Rhodes told Ms Arroyo.

After wrapping up her participation in the World Economic Forum here on the world's top political and economic policymakers late Friday, the President was greeted by the happy news that Moody's Investors Services had raised its ratings outlook for the Philippines.

The international credit rating group raised its sovereign rating outlook for the Philippines from stable to positive, citing the gains made in stabilizing the country's fiscal position and in reducing its reliance on foreign financing.

FULL A-7

Education project seeks to turn best, brightest kids into teachers

By DJ Yap

ONE A DECADE FROM NOW, A thousand of the brightest young Filipinos will graduate from college and journey down a road less and less traveled.

They will not look for work abroad as nurses or engineers. Neither will they approach call centers, parent law or medicine. Instead, they will sharpen their pencils, head to no-frills, and teach public schoolchildren.

That is the principle behind the 1,000 Teachers Program, an ambitious project of the Philippine Business for Education (PBEd) that seeks to attract the most talented high school seniors to the teaching profession.

The PBEd, an organization of business leaders advocating education reforms, has partnered with the De-

BREAKING A-11

HK immigration detains Erap for not having security men

By Philip C. Tubeza
Correspondent

HONG KONG—JOSEPH ESTRADA'S FIRST FOREIGN trip as a free man hit unexpected turbulence yesterday.

The ousted President and his wife, former Sen. Luisa Ejercito Estrada, were held up for more than an hour at the international airport in Hong Kong, throwing Philippine consulate officials into a flurry.

Touched by the incident on the phone about 10 minutes after his arrival, Estrada said immigration officers were hurting him and his wife from entering the former Crown Colony.

"Humiliin na nilang sa airport dito sa Hong Kong,

FULL STORY A-11

FIRST OUTING AS FREE MAN Ex-President Estrada with wife Loi are off to Hong Kong. Curiously, for travelling with no security men, they are briefly detained.

Melo brings credibility, gives new face to Comelec

By Beverly T. Mendoza

HIS NAME IS SYNONYMOUS WITH credibility, as one election lawyer put it. But not a 75-year-old retired Supreme Court justice eyeing the Comelec chairmanship.

"I was enjoying my retirement but when duty calls, you respond," said Jose A.R. Melo in his resignation letter he drop at the beleaguered Comelec.

He does not think his age (75) should be an issue. "Physically, I'm more than capable," he said in 10 lines.

Melo has served a total of 40 years in government service, beginning his career as an executive assistant in the Makasiar[illegible] legal office during the term of President Diosdado Macapagal, the President's father.

He spent 23 years in the judiciary and was appointed associate justice of the Supreme Court in 1990, from which he retired in 2002.

Before his appointment to the high court, he served at the then-united Court of Appeals from 1986 to 1992, and before that at the Intermediate Appellate Court.

As presiding justice of the Court of Appeals, he held the record for having a overloading of cases.

He was commissioner of the Civil

FULL A-7

Army's 'thinking general' eased out with Esperon's extension

By Fe Zamora

KNOWN AS A "THINKING GENERAL," Lt. Gen. Cardozo Luna was said to be a strong contender for the post of commanding general of the Philippine Army late year.

Luna has a master's degree in Economics Planning and a Ph.D. in Peace Administration Economics, both from the University of Pennsylvania.

Luna lost the race to Lt. Gen. Alexander Yano, who is reportedly being groomed to replace Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. in May this year.

The term of Esperon, who was supposed to retire on Feb. 6, has been extended for three months by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The extension was reportedly in-

FULL A-7

LT.GEN. CARDOZO LUNA Arrived with MA, Ph.D.

4 MIT students here studying 'malunggay'

By Tess R. Salazar

OUR REACHES ARE A LURE, BUT three students from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Sloan School of Management were enticed to come for an entirely different reason...the lowly backyard malunggay.

Malunggay [scientific name: *Moringa oleifera*] is a fast-growing, drought-resistant tree with leaves that can, among other things, increase lactation in nursing mothers and address the problem of malnutrition.

It has actually been dubbed "the most nutritious plant in the world," and is also an obligatory ingredient in

LIFESTYLE A-1

JOB

Build your future with us

Read-Along session: Kids learn teamwork from new PBA commissioner

NEWS /A6

Pinoy filmmaker scores slam dunk with winning documentary at Slamdance, a viral alternative to Sundance Film Festival.

ENTERTAINMENT / F1

EXCLUSIVES: Children's Environmental Awareness and Action Foundation seeks to build pride in our nation's unparalleled biodiversity.

LIFESTYLE / H3

Coffee sued his 12 children to school; jeepneys replaced his carabao

SUNDAYBIZ / B2

A1 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER SUNDAY, JANUARY 27, 2008

WEATHER FORECAST

Metro Manila	Partly cloudy	Batanes	Partly cloudy
Baguio	Partly cloudy	Basco	Partly cloudy
Tuguegarao	Mostly cloudy	Cubo	Partly cloudy
Iloilo	Mostly cloudy	Kalibo	Partly cloudy
Puerto Princesa	Partly cloudy	Mrs. Kinabalu	Partly cloudy
Cebu	Partly cloudy	Mrs. Kinabalu	Partly cloudy
Legazpi	Partly cloudy	Tuguegarao	Partly cloudy
Zamboanga	Partly cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly cloudy

Second FRONTPAGE

EZ2 — SIX DIGIT

10 4 8 6 9 3 8 9

(No winner yesterday)

Next Draw: SUPERTHREE, Tuesday

5 9 4 8 4 8

6/42 LUZON/VIS-MIN

1 13 21 22 33 35

P14,183,083.80

GMA orders stop to oust-JDV move

Ermita: Call from Davos aborted Lakas-CMD plan to unseat Speaker

By Michael Lim Ubac and Norman Bordadora

A PLOT TO UNSEAT SPEAKER JOSE DE VENECIA when Congress resumes its session on Monday was reportedly aborted by a long distance call from President Macapagal-Arroyo, who instructed her political lieutenants to desist.

At the story went, word that some members of the administration party were calling up their colleagues and seeking a head count for the ouster-De Venecia plan reached the Speaker, who was in Jakarta for a meeting of Asian political parties. He Senate and the President, who was in Switzerland attending the World Economic Forum, talked on the phone Friday night. Later that night, the President called up Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita and instructed him to stop her allies in Congress from pushing through with the ouster move.

Tonight for comment, Ermita confirmed Ms Arroyo had indeed personally instructed him by phone to talk to the critics of De Venecia.

"There was talk going around of a possible leadership change in the speakership (which) reached the President in Davos. The President (was) this agonized night of ... support for the bid. She called me up to make a statement condemning it," said Ermita.

Ermita then called up Lakas-CMD party leaders to tell them any campaign against the Speaker "is not authorized."

"This is not true," Ermita quoted the President as saying, referring to allegations that the moves against De Venecia had her blessings.

Strengthen, unify party

"If ever there was such a move, she is discouraging (it). The efforts and focus of the President now are precisely to strengthen the party and really unify it," Ermita said.

Preparations are in high gear for the national democratic institutions of the Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats, the lead party in the majority coalition, on Feb. 7, Ermita said.

On with consolidation

Mr Arroyo is chair of Lakas-CMD while De Venecia is president. Former President Fidel Ramos is chair emeritus. The ruling coalition will begin preparations for the 2010 presidential election.

"We will go on with the national democratic assembly precisely to consolidate the party and unify it. If people perceive there's no unity (among us) —" said Ermita.

Ermita refused to name the ringleaders of the plot, but a statement issued by the De Venecia camp identified Davao City Representative and Mayor Rodrigo Duterte Pimpampo Sagurio.

The press statement called "this leadership change in House, GMA is fully behind JDV-Lakas leaders" and the move to oust De Speaker also involved "some misguided party members."

Asked about his involvement in the alleged plot, Negrosito declined being the ringleader.

"I'm not directly involved ... I'm just a listening post and weighing my options," he said, adding that "those who are moving against De Venecia "come from Luzon."

He confirmed "there has been some chance for change in the House but it's not a unilateral plan or something like that."

Negrosito said his only role was forming plural on a list of possible replacements for De Venecia. He admitted that he asked those behind the move to consider a Mindanao salon for speaker—if they succeeded in unseating De Venecia.

Give Mindanao a chance

"Basically, those who want change have put me in their shortlist as a possible replacement in the event of any change. That's my only role," he said.

"I just told them that maybe they should consider giving Mindanao a chance in the event they get the numbers because all our top leaders are from Luzon," Negrosito said.

Esperon: Now is time to bear down on rebels

By Alcuin Papa in Manila and TJ Burgonio in Davao

ARMED FORCES OF THE Philippines Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. yesterday said he would beat down hardest on New People's Army (NPA) rebels and the al-Qaida-linked Abu Sayyaf Group in anticipation of their obliteration during his recommended term as military chief.

Esperon said that with the military's successes in 2007 "there is no (better) time than now to push forward." "This is a great opportunity. We have our main targets and we have agreed on those targets. So we will really go for it," he said.

Esperon said three months was enough time to rout the communist rebels.

"From today until May 9 (that's around 100 days. We can do a lot in that time. We already know our priorities. It's just a matter of following up our priorities," he said.

He said the military would use a combination of combat and civil operations to defeat the NPA. "Our targets want us to close them to 5,000 (guerrilla fighters). At the end of 2007, they were just 5,700," he said.

Earlier this month, the military reported the dismantling of 37 NPA guerrilla fronts in the country.

In March, Esperon said another 17 of the 87 remaining guerrilla fronts would be dismantled.

In a talk with reporters at Camp Aguinaldo, Esperon shrugged off criticism of his term extension. He was supposed to retire on Feb. 9 upon reaching the mandatory military retirement age of 56.

"I am ready to face the critics," he said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo announced in Davos, Switzerland, the extension of Esperon's term in three months.

"What's important now is to fulfill my job because I have the marching orders to defeat the NPA and the Abu Sayyaf by whatever their comments are, if say (it) will taken. I know that, I expected that from them (critics). But I will do my best to prove them wrong," Esperon said.

A member of Philippine Military Academy (PMA) Class of 1974, Esperon also dismissed suggestions the extension of his term would lessen resentment in the ranks and fuel military adventurism.

He maintained the AFP was "solid" behind the recent administration and any destabilization attempt would not be supported by the men in uniform. PDN reports from Nestor J. Punzalan and Julie Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao

FIRST QUARTER Scores survivors with the next generation holds commemorative rally at Mendiola Bridge as they mark the 20th anniversary of the historic event of Jan. 26, 1970, when Ferdinand Marcos delivered his State of the Nation Address in the old Congress building as thousands of demonstrators gathered outside and delivered their own address. INQUIRER

First Quarter Storm recalled

IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN 38. possible to die in the 1970s.

But some 400 members of the activist group First Quarter Storm Movement reassembled to set foot on historic Chino Roces (Mendiola) Bridge in Manila yesterday morning.

The demonstrations were allowed by ancient policemen of the Manila Police District to hold a brief program in the area—considered a no-rally zone on weekdays—after showing a permit issued by the Manila city government.

The FQS Movement is the modern-day organization of activists of the 1960s and '70s who clashed together "to keep alive the spirit of the FQS of 1970."

According to the group, the FQS was a baptism of fire for the generation of militants that set off to join the opposition to the repressive Marcos regime.

Some 300 protesters yesterday, however, were not as lucky. Members of various militant groups gathered at Plaza Miranda in Quiapo at 10:30 a.m. and tried to march toward Mendiola. They were blocked by antiriot policemen at the corner of C.M. Recto Avenue and Abenaya Street after they failed to show permit from the city government.

The demonstrators, who were protesting against the Bicol Economic Forum being held in Davao, Switzerland, reluctantly dispersed at around 1 p.m.

Tina G. Santos

Selection of Palace appointees starts

By Michael Lim Ubac

MALACAÑANG HAS STARTED the selection process to fill the vacant posts in the executive and judiciary branches, including those belonging to Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita.

Ermita yesterday said the Palace search committee chaired by Bernardino Abad had been tasked by President Macapagal-Arroyo to screen nominees for three vacant posts—that of Undersecretary presiding justice and the chairpersons of the two constitutional bodies, the Commission on Audit (COA) and Civil Service Commission (CSC).

Screening process open

"We have opened the screening process for nominations," said Ermita, adding that the search committee will give Ms Arroyo separate shortlists for each post.

He declined to name any front-runners in the race.

The Sandiganbayan has been without a presiding justice since Justice Teresita Leonardo-De Castro became an associate justice of the Supreme Court on Dec. 3, 2007.

Ms Arroyo has 90 days from the date of vacancy to fill the Sandiganbayan post.

The heads of the two constitutional bodies will also retire next month. COA will be headed by Reynaldo Villar, Guillermo N. Carague, the former secretary of the Department of Budget and Management, and the CSC by its chair, Karina David, who formerly headed the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council.

Gov't employees confirm GMA appointees unqualified

By Jovanie Aning

AN UMBRELLA ORGANIZAtion of women and associations of government rank-and-file employees yesterday came to the defense of embattled Civil Service Commission Chair Karina David, who had drawn the ire of Malacañang for questioning the qualifications of presidential appointees to government posts.

In a statement, the 40,000-strong Public Services Labor Independent Confederation (PSLINK) lauded David for exposing the continuing abuse of the presidential prerogative that has led to the appointment of unqualified, incompetent and corrupt people to the bureaucracy.

The group likewise agreed that the shocking professionalism in the civil service was due to the "politicization and militarization" of the public sector, manifested by the appointment of unqualified persons to the key government positions.

David's release to the GMA chair ends this week, said in a speech before the Makati Business Club last week that the President had made more than half of the 8,000 career executive appointments, and 60 percent of the appointees were not eligible for their positions.

PSLINK said it was repulsed by the political patronage that pervaded every government and public institution in appointments to government positions.

Threatens democracy

"These critical issues, if not dealt with, surely threaten our democracy and degrade the quality of our public services. We therefore call on the administration to open up to its failings and clean up its mess. Rid the civil service of corrupt and non performing officials. Rid it of self-serving politics," PSLINK said.

"It is truly unfortunate to hear about the revelations of the CSC but this is the sad reality that we must confront and we commend CSC Chair David for bringing it out into the open and standing up even at the risk of (sudden) fleet the Arroyo administration," the group said.

Malacañang had said David's claim that the "dominant" (political) system prevailed in civil service appointments was unfair.

But Alfredo Bonjan, PSLINK's research and advocacy officer, said David's revelations came at the right time. She said the civil service has been battered by one controversial case after another, which confirmed David's report on the degradation of professionalism and the absence of incompetence and graft and corruption in the government.

She cited the recent controversy involving Technical Education and Skills Development Authority Director Orestes Gonzaga's decision to allow the terminally ill granted guilty of grave misconduct and gross neglect of duty by the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission for his position to remain in active service pending review until 59.1 million.

She also noted the case involving the Air Transport Office, a line agency of the Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC) headed by homeopathic drug lord Lauro Medina, which has been blamed for the downgrading of the country's air safety rating by the United States' Federal Aviation Administration.

"There are just two recent cases that show the extent of the abuse of the presidential prerogative are hampering the quality of performance of government agencies. It is unfortunate though that not much action is accorded to these pertinent findings," PSLINK said.

WHAT'S INSIDE

SUSPECT in broadcaster's slay charged (A9)

NEGROS TILLERS to march across the province (A7)

NOLI ASSURES OFWs in Saudi of assistance (A6)

Chief Justice: No intent to usurp power of Congress

By Gabriel Cardenas
and Yolanda Sorzo-Fuertes
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—CHIEF JUSTICE REYNATO Puno yesterday said the Supreme Court did not accept the law-making power of Congress when it issued a circular advising judges nationwide to impose fines—not imprisonment—on people convicted of libel.

"I think our friends from the executive department were too quick in reacting to the circular issued by the court. The circulars were given even before the circular was issued," said Puno, who was a guest of the local chapter of the Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship International here.

Presidential (spp) Counsel Sergio Apostol earlier said that Puno's circular was "not legal" because it was tantamount to amending the libel law.

Apostol was also reported as saying that someone might file an impeachment case against the Supreme Court justices for issuing the circular.

"I do not see why this could be a basis of a complaint for impeachment. But if we will be impeached for protecting the rights of the people, so be it," Puno told reporters here.

"I suggest (but for (Apostol) read and study the circular. It is very clear (that the circular did not usurp the power of Congress to make laws, the power of Congress to decrease what ought to be the penalty of a particular crime," he added.

NPC request

Puno said the circular was issued after the National Press Club (NPC) asked the tribunal's committee on the revision of the rules of court to revisit some of the rules on the implementation of the libel law.

Puno said the NPC had asked the court if members of the media might be exempted from having to post bail in criminal cases.

The NPC also asked the court to look into the possibility of adding judges to impose fines, instead of imprisonment, in restrictions for libel.

"On the first request, the court decided on (to) it down, precisely on the grounds that if you crash a rule which would only be distinct and applicable to members of the media, it comes into conflict with the doctrine of equal protection of the law," Puno said.

Amendment?

Aside from this, he said, that request may need an amendment to some of the constitution's substantive laws, like the Revised Penal Code, which only Congress can do.

"On the second request, however, the court, upon recommendation of the committee, agreed with the NPC," Puno said.

He added that there was nothing new in imposing fines instead of prison terms on people convicted of libel.

In various cases from 1999 to 2008, the court had issued decisions where they dropped the penalties imposed on those convicted of libel, from imprisonment to a fine, he said.

Not new

"In other words, this (circular) is not by any means new jurisprudence. This ruling had been handed down by the court way back in 1998," Puno said.

He cited, among others, the case of former Makati Vice Mayor Roberto Brillante, a political opponent of Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay, who appealed to the court after he was convicted of libel.

"He was sentenced to suffer imprisonment. He was convicted on five counts of libel. But on appeal with the Supreme Court, the justices held that instead of imprisonment, Brillante should pay the corresponding fines," Puno said.

"What is the reason for that? The court held that the offenses were committed during the election period in 1988 in Makati where passions ran high. And the court said that (the) must have agitated the accused in in writing the open letters to the people of Makati, letters which contained the libelous statements," he said.

Urgent bills

Senate Majority Floor Leader Francis Pangilinan reversed in he in agreement with Puno.

In a press conference in Iloilo City yesterday, Pangilinan said he would support the prioritization of pending bills in Congress that would decriminalize libel.

"It would be a good signal that (President Macapagal-Arroyo supports) freedom of the press, especially now with (the pressure of) what we feel to be a series of controversial measures that I believe violate the constitutional provisions on freedoms of speech and expression," he said.

Pangilinan said Congress could work on the swift passage of the bills if the President certified them as urgent.

With an Inquirer Visayas report

Other inmates resent Manero release

By Julie M. Aurelio

WHILE THEY WERE HAPPY THAT Herbert Manero Jr. had finally been set free, some inmates lamented their own "never-ending stay" in the national penitentiary.

Inmates at The New Bilibid Prison said there were around 48 or 50 inmates whose sentences had been served but whose release papers were stuck in the Department of Justice.

An inmate, who declined to be identified fearing repercussions, said several inmates who expected to be freed in December were told that the DOJ was still reviewing their cases.

During an interview before Manero's release on Friday, NHP Supt. Julio Ares Aga, however, said around 10 inmates who had served their sentences were released in December.

"The DOJ is still reviewing the cases of the other inmates to check if the terms had expired and they were free to go," Aga said.

Some of the inmates blamed the delays and a tightening of restrictions to the rules involving the release of former Congressman Romeo Jalosjos last month.

Premature

"May mga inmate dito na gold boy Jalosjos dahil nga sa maraming pagdaan nun. Wala pang natatalsipo sa (There are inmates here who are angry at Jalosjos because of his premature release. No one has been released since then)," a source said.

Jalosjos was released from prison on Dec. 16. He went home to Zamboanga del Norte but was convicted a week later by police. The Department of Justice ruled that Jalosjos' sentence was cut per up and he would only be eligible for release in 2030. Jalosjos' December release order was said to have been only a draft.

The inmate complained that Jalosjos had been granted many privileges not given to other detainees.

"If given the same privileges as Jalosjos, many other inmates would be free by now," the inmate said in Filipino.

He also complained that if Jalosjos was indeed granted good conduct time allowance (GCTA) of 15 days, other inmates in the minimum security compound should be given the same.

Cancelled privileges

"But as far as I know, we are only given two days of GCTA a year. And some of us have been colonists for more than three years now ... we deserve more," he said.

Other prison insiders claimed that officials had also cancelled some of their privileges since the Jalosjos affair in December.

One was the "sleeping out" privilege, which allows minimum security prisoners to sleep outside the minimum security camp, as long as they were inside the NHP reservation.

"Since late December, officials have revoked the sleeping out privilege although they began allowing it again little by little last week," the insider said.

Jalosjos was granted sleeping out privileges before his short-lived release last month.

At the maximum security compound where Jalosjos was detained, prison officials have also limited the frequency of "mag-in" visits by immediate family members from every Saturday to twice a month.

"They have also disallowed children 21 years old and younger be stay in visits," another source said. "Kapag pasapon sa ajlo Christmas ng babawasan na nga ang stay-in. (We were told that after Christmas these stay-in visits would be lessened)."

Holcim

FROM REFUSE TO FUEL

Holcim offers a sustainable solution to the country's trash problem

Waste materials suitable for co-processing are used tires, wood runners, waste oil, oil-contaminated debris, paint residues, and industrial sludge.

PROPER WASTE MANAGEMENT is still a big challenge in our country today. Even dumpsites, which are less environment-friendly, have become scarce as the country's population continues to increase rapidly.

For example, in December 2007, the volume of garbage generated by Metro Manila's more than 10 million residents was between 5,000 to 7,000 tons according to the Metro Manila Development Authority. That translates easily to 84,000 tons annually—a metric Manila alone.

Hypothetically, if we could collect all that garbage for a year and be able to process it and convert it into fuel, that could provide enough energy to produce more than 1,56,000 tons of cement which is equivalent to building 19,000 two-coat houses or 1,000 school buildings.

The use of waste or alternative fuel or raw material (AFR) is called co-processing. This successful option for waste management has been adopted by energy-intensive industries in Western Europe and is now being started here in the Philippines by Holcim, a global leader in cement and construction materials manufacturing.

Co-processing refers to the use of waste materials to produce energy needed in the production of cement, lime, steel, and glass. In short it is a process of recovering energy and raw materials from the both we produce. The co-processing of waste materials substitutes the use of fossil fuel such as coal, and therefore, helps in the preservation of the environment.

Ernesto Ordoñez, vice president for alternative fuel and raw materials at Holcim Philippines, Inc. says Holcim's cement facilities in Bulacan, Iligan, Davao and Lugait have already started co-processing in the production of cement. "These plants have been undertaking the utilization of alternative fuel and raw materials in cement production."

Ordoñez says co-processing is principled upon the respect for the waste hierarchy. Waste shall not be co-processed in cement kilns if there are economically and ecologically better ways of recovery available.

The system of co-processing is guided by strict environmental standards as it complies not only with the Clean Air Act, but with international emission standards as well.

Before waste can be accepted for co-processing, it has to pass certain waste acceptance criteria that are based on health, safety and environmental and product quality standards.

"We do not want to compromise the safety of communities, the environment, our workforce and our product. This is why not all waste can be co-processed" explains Ordoñez.

The following waste materials are suitable for co-processing: used tires, wood runners, waste oil, oil contaminated debris, paint residues, and industrial sludge.

These types of wastes, rather than be incinerated or collected in landfills, can be pre-processed into alternative fuel (and cleaner liquid materials), which would then be used as fuel and raw materials for cement production, according to Ordoñez.

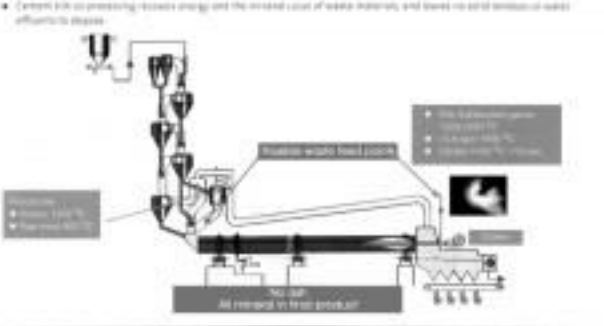
Jean Pierre Daigle, vice president for Alternative Fuel and Raw Materials of the Holcim Group Support, Ltd. says "worldwide, there is already a problem of resource limitation. We are going into a world of limits in resources and low energy. The environment is at an energy intensive industry and we all need cement. We need this for progress. So why not use the waste as source of energy instead of fossil fuel like coal and limestone?"

Daigle was in Western Europe, co-processing is already well-established and a study followed program, with 45 percent of the fuel retrieved at cement kilns already being supplied by waste.

Seventy percent of raw feeds at Holcim in Belgium and Germany are generated from waste, according to Daigle, who adds that this ratio can be achieved in all Holcim operations across Western Europe.

The cement kiln co-processing technology

- Waste materials are processed along with cement clinker and raw materials at temperatures ranging from 850° C. to above 2,000° C. These high temperatures ensure that emissions meet stringent local and international standards, including those for dioxins and furans.
- Cement kiln co-processing recovers energy and the mineral value of waste materials, and leaves no solid residues or waste effluents to dispose.



Daigle, a chemical engineer who developed his company's co-processing program back in the early 1990s, has already successfully replicated it in Holcim operations in other countries such as Mexico, Brazil and Chile. In these countries co-processed waste accounts for 30 percent of their fuel needs.

"My personal goal is for industries to use as waste for fuel at 100 percent. We want to be a partner of society in helping solve the waste problem and turn it into an opportunity," says Daigle. He is currently focused on accelerating the use of waste as fuel in the Philippines, China, and India.

Holcim has partnered with GIZ, an international cooperation enterprise for sustainable development with worldwide operations. Holcim and GIZ have created a set of international guidelines for co-processing in the cement industry. This guide book has laid the foundations for an effective waste management program that addresses environment protection and resource preservation.

In the Philippines, the cement association (Cebilap) recently launched a build-grow Mabuhay in the use of raw materials in cement manufacturing. The manual was a collaboration between the cement association, DENR-EMB and BSI.

"Our initiatives on co-processing of waste fuel demonstrate Holcim's advocacy for environmental protection and preservation," says Daigle.

"Simply said, around six million tons of waste is managed and converted to energy by Holcim worldwide is our contribution to environment protection and preservation in compliance with strict co-processing guidelines," according to Daigle.

When asked if he thinks of retirement soon, the Greenpeace advocate said "the vision of a self-sustaining and cleaner world keeps me going. There is no retirement when you speak of and think of how we can make the world a better place."

> Co-processing is a process of recovering energy and raw materials from the trash to use in the production of cement, lime, steel, and glass. The co-processing of waste materials substitutes the use of fossil fuel such as coal, and therefore, helps in the preservation of the environment

THE WASTE HIERARCHY

The first priority on top is the avoidance of waste. Next comes repair and reuse. The third is to increase the proportion of waste that is recycled. The fourth is co-processing, which includes material recycling and energy recovery. Below this is incineration and landfilling, which are disposal activities with no or limited potential for any recovery.

NEW PBA COMMISSIONER Ronald "Sonny" Barrios reads a story on teamwork to the children at the Inquirer Read-Along yearendup

INQUIRER READ-ALONG

Who better to learn teamwork from than new PBA commish

By Kara V. Pedroso
Inquirer Research

PHILIPPINE BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION (PBA) Commissioner Ronald "Sonny" Barrios and ABS-CBN Explorer caper JC Intal read children's stories that stressed the values of teamwork, friendship and sharing at yesterday's Inquirer Read-Along session, the second for this year and the 22nd since the program began in May last year.

Barrios read "Elipan and Boyet" a story about the importance of cooperation between the two protagonists, Elipan (Alonzo) and Boyet (Jacky Rivik), who could not survive without each other's help.

A hero in the end

Intal, the 6-foot-4 former Ateneo Blue Eagle, read "The Sad Prince" with one of the kids named on his lap. The story tells of a sad prince who found happiness in the friendship of a boy named Mintic and his pet dog Bulda.

Five-year-old Elise Aran, a student at Golden Enrichment Learning Program, read Todd Parr's "Otto Goes to Camp" to the 39 children in the audience, most of whom were older than she. The story is about a dog named Otto who "was used to sharing (with) his environment" ("ally" but who in the end emerges alone).

Browsing storyteller Gish Rodrigues of Alinprep Storytellers Philippines also delighted the audience with Grace Chang's "Ehall and Ehall," a heartwarming story about an animals-long Tito, who chews his brains to balloons because he was used to sharing them with his parents.

'Happy coincidence'

"It was very fulfilling. We enjoyed it," Barrios told the Inquirer after the activity, adding that he and other PBA executives had been looking forward to participating in the Inquirer read-along sessions.

Initially, Barrios said he was worried that he would not be able to spare the storm because his busy stint as officer in charge of the PBA ended. But earlier this week, he was named PBA commissioner.

He said it was a "happy coincidence" that when he sets to read some, he was already PBA commissioner.

So what's on the bookshelf of the new PBA commissioner? "Normally they're either autobiographies or books about successful companies. The last book I read was about Coca-Cola, an in-depth look at how it marketed its way up," he said.

First time

Intal, on the other hand, said he was a bit nervous when he began reading to the children. "It's my first time to read in front of kids," he said.

"My girlfriend is actually a preschool teacher, but unfortunately, I wasn't able to get tips from her," Intal added, laughing.

"All in all, I think the kids enjoyed the activity. And, honestly, so did I," he said. "I was also happy to see someone so young as 5 years old read."

Intal was referring to Aran, a nursery student at Xavier School who started reading when he was four. Aside from reading, Aran likes to play tennis.

"He really loves reading. When he was younger and could not yet read by himself, he would always ask me or his lola to read to him. He has initiative. Now he reads to his younger brother, Stupe, who is three. If he does something good, he gets books from us," Aran's mom, Pauline, said.

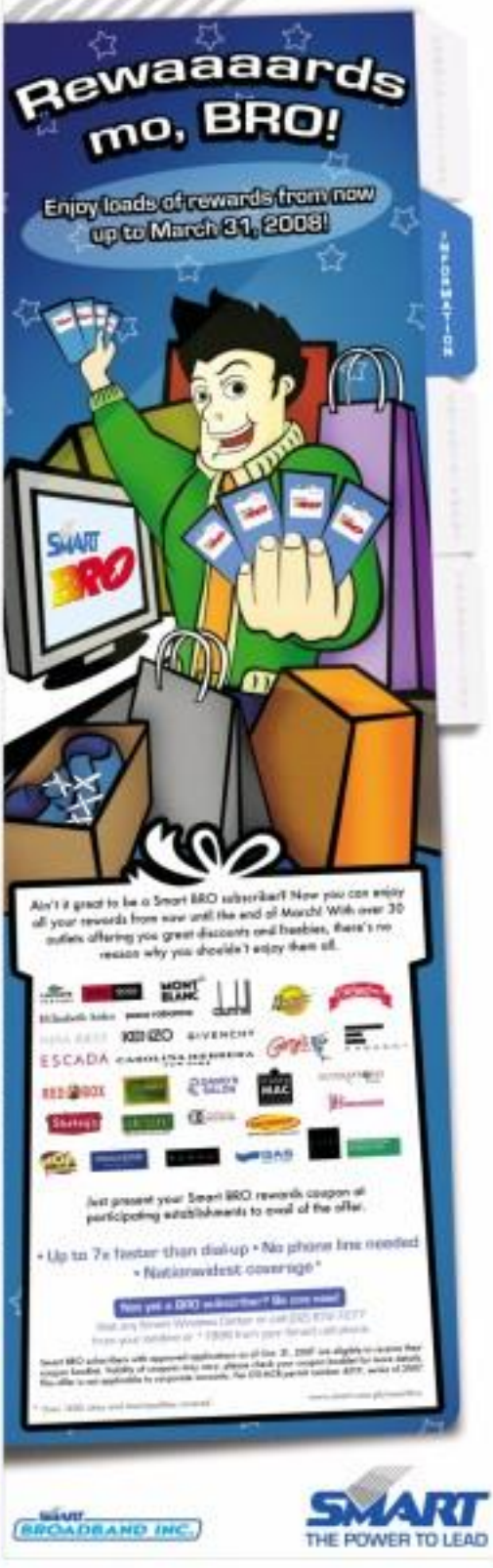
Supplementary program

The Golden Enrichment Learning Program is a supplementary program for children in English and Math. It was established in 2004 by a group of educators who saw "the need to reinforce school-based learning, in today's globally competitive environment."

Yesterday's activity was in cooperation with Golden and the Alitaptap Storytellers.

The next session will be on Feb. 9 and will feature veteran actress and television host Tessie Tomas, children's book author and Wanda Gramedia Bunjar Pelp Cuesta, young TV star Gabrielle Rose and storytellers from Alitaptap School.

Launched in May last year as an initiative of Inquirer Boookstore, Inquirer Library and Inquirer Foundation, the program aims to reach children aged 7 to 13 before reading (language) storytelling sessions with celebrities and popular role models for the youth. Interested participants may contact Ellen Caparas or Gilbe Beltran at 897-8800, local 329. Slots are available on a first-come, first-served basis. With a report from Schatti Ocodole, Inquirer Research



Noli assures OFWs living under Saudi bridge of help

By Cynthia D. Balana

PHILADELPHIA (UPDATED) ADVANCE

for the repatriation of at least 51 overseas Filipino workers who have been living under a road flyover in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, for over a month in the hope they would be arrested for overstaying and deported to the Philippines.

Vice President Noli de Castro, presidential adviser on OFWs, assured the workers help was on the way to get them safely back to the Philippines. He gave the assurance on his radio program, "Para sa Iyo, Bayan," after talking on the phone with the Philippine Consul General in Jeddah Gerardo Tago.

Overstayed

Tago told De Castro the OFWs had converged under the Al-Khaldiya flyover near a depression facility adjacent to the Jhuaidiya district where Saudi authorities round up foreign nationals illegally in the country every day.

The deportation facility is exclusively for expatriate workers and Muslims who have overstayed their search and had left passport visas.

The OFWs had earlier paid fixers to include them in an amnesty for illegal aliens supposedly issued by the Saudi government. It turned out there was no such amnesty, Tago told De Castro.

He said the OFWs, some women and two children among them, were supposed to be reunited.

He said Filipinos were not the only ones living under the bridge—overstaying tourists, Bangladeshis, Pakistani and other workers were there, too.

Last Monday, Tago, with labor attaché Rubyk Nilong, assistant labor attaché Eliane Mesa and welfare officer Romeo Dela Cruz met with the OFWs who told them about the 51 Filipinos living under the bridge who were in need of food and medicine. The OFWs would not give the names of the 51 Filipinos, however, just their aliases.

Registration

Tago said it would be difficult to repatriate the 51 OFWs if they did not give their names.

"They still have not given us their real names," Tago said in Filipino.

Tago said the Saudi deportation facility was full.

Filipinos already in the facility have been provided with travel documents in the Philippines upon the request of Saudi authorities and have been cleared for deportation, he said.

Tago said the consulate learned of the OFWs under the bridge only on Jan. 17 after a Filipino community leader reported to him that individuals posing as agents of the consulate were asking the OFWs for fees in exchange for the repatriation of runaways

Negros tillers set own march

AT LEAST 3,000 farmers from all over Negros Occidental are set to march across the province beginning Monday to urge the Arroyo administration and Congress to pass a law extending the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program and its land distribution component beyond 2008.

Dubbed "Lakat Negros: Lakbayan nang mga Manggagawang Bukid sa Negrosnon sa Daku kag Kalayuan" (Walk Negros: Farmers' March for Land Reform and Justice), the march will start in Bagay City in the north and Kabankalan City in the south and converge on Bacolod City on Jan. 31 for a general mass action.

Farmers' groups from the province's 13 cities and 19 towns will be joining the march, patterned after the one held recently by farmers from Bukidnon and Cagayan.

In an e-mailed statement from Bacolod, Jose Bedia Ingles, president of peasant federation Task Force Mapalad, said that doing the way the marchers will be joined by other farmers' groups and support organizations that have formed themselves into a broad coalition called Negros CARP Reform Movement (NCRM).

"Lakat Negros intends to dramatize the demands of the Negros farmers for the immediate extension of CARP with land distribution, the emphasize land distribution because some groups, including those in government, are pushing for CARP extension only for support services components and none for land distribution," Ingles said.

Heading for CARD is set to expire middle of this year, Jerome Aning

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KNOCKOUT TIGDAS 2007 ACCOMPLISHMENT REPORT

Regions	Total Pop	Elig Pop	Analysis	
			No. of 9-48mos old children given Anti-Measles Vaccine	%
I	4,875,200	475,332	425,868	90
II	3,194,400	311,454	287,329	92
III	9,576,900	933,748	913,938	98
IV-A	11,152,800	1,087,398	1,072,476	99
IV-B	2,792,500	272,269	242,981	89
V	5,392,300	525,749	490,403	93
VI	7,149,700	697,096	644,871	93
VII	6,619,800	645,431	616,487	96
VIII	4,187,000	408,233	366,595	90
IX	3,284,600	320,249	312,201	97
X	4,087,700	398,551	384,166	96
XI	4,154,300	405,044	384,525	95
XII	3,817,900	372,245	362,384	97
ARMM	3,320,600	323,759	320,309	99
CARAGA	2,408,400	234,819	223,267	95
CAR	1,592,400	155,259	131,992	85
NCR	11,099,800	1,082,231	1,018,068	94
PHILS	88,706,300	8,648,864	8,197,860	95

Our heartfelt thanks to HER EXCELLENCY GLORIA MACAPAGAL- ARROYO for putting our children first and signing Executive Order 663 implementing the national commitment for "BAKUNA ANG UNA SA SANGGOL AT INA." This is the first ever Presidential Issuance showing the full resolve of the nation's top leader to strengthen the Expanded Program on Immunization.

To the entire DOH family, our midwives and barangay health workers for not settling for a below 95% target — your efforts to Reach Every Barangay has secured the protection of an entire generation of Filipino children.

We also commend Secretary Tahir Sulaik of the ARMM Region for making it possible to reach the un-reached children of Mindanao and for the amazing 99% overall turnout in the ARMM provinces.

Our congratulations to the local chief executives of the top performing regions and provinces for hitting our targets and setting the benchmark of health performance for other leaders.

Finally, we thank our local and international partners led by the World Health Organization and UNICEF for being with us in this fight as in the many other fights and victories of the DOH.

Other DOH Partners:

Church of the Latter-Day Saints • United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund • World Health Organization • Boy Scout of the Philippines • Girl Scout of the Philippines • Zonta Club of Greater Rizal I • Rotary Club of the Philippines • Inner Wheel Clubs of the Philippines • International Committee of the Red Cross Office • Philippine Airlines Mountaineering Club • Philippine Airlines Foundation • Department of Environmental and Natural Resources • Department of National Defense • Department of Interior & Local Government • Department of Social Welfare & Development • Office on Muslim Affairs • National Commission on Indigenous People • Philippine National Police • League of Provinces of the Philippines • League of Cities of the Philippines • Philippine Medical Association • Pasay-Parañaque Medical Society • Philippine Nurses Association • Philippine League of Government and Private Midwives • Integrated Midwives Association of the Philippines • Exhibits Asia • Plan Philippines • Universal Robina Corporation • Globe Telecom • Pamanga's Best • Philippine National Red Cross and Chapters • Center for Disease and Control Atlanta • United Nations Foundation • Council for the Welfare for Children • Zone-1 Tondo Organization • Philippine Pediatric Society • All the Health Workers • All Barangay Health Workers and other Volunteers • All Parents • All Filipino Children • And others that supported the campaign

Thank you for making the future of our children better, brighter and healthier.

DOH it na!

Suspect in broadcaster's slay charged with murder

By Dennis Santos
and Orlando Dinoy
Inquirer Mindanao

DAVAO CITY—THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation (NBI) has filed charges of murder and illegal possession of firearms against the prime suspect in the killing of radio commentator Rodolfo Lozano here.

Lozano, 68, of Purok Hornet, Lanang, Davao City, was arrested by NBI agents on Jan. 24 after an unlicensed firearm was found in his car.

Senior Supt. Lucian's NBI-subpoenaed Rajeev were one .40-cal. Colt Blank 38 series, a .38-cal. pistol and ammunition, four magazines, a magazine pouch, a holster and a black clutch bag.

Lozano, a widower who was known to his colleagues as "Sir Issac" or "Kuya Mo-Mo-Jay, was in his car when he was gunned down by motorcycle-riding gunmen on Dec. 24, shortly after his morning broadcast over radio dyDD. Lozano was hit in the head and chest and his two companions were unhurt. The NBI said Lozano was positively identified by a relative... a resident... as the one who shot the victim.

"The suspect, while in jail, suddenly blurted out a song which the witness heard, saying 'Ito ang sabihin mo sa mga pumatay sa radio broadcaster,' " Ramos said.

Ramos said Lozano called up Lozano at around 9 a.m. on Dec. 6 and warned the latter about his attacks.

Supala said Lozano allegedly wanted he would kill Lozano if he did not stop the commentaries against him. ... Which a report from Nina O. Santos

"When the witness saw the suspect in the line-up, he remembered him because of the smile on his face. He said the suspect talked to him outside the radio station for about two hours," Ramos also added.

Another witness, Arthur Salgado, an employee of dyDD, claimed that Lozano called up Lozano at around 9 a.m. on Dec. 6 and warned the latter about his attacks.

Supala said Lozano allegedly wanted he would kill Lozano if he did not stop the commentaries against him. ... Which a report from Nina O. Santos

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Sunday, January 27, 2008
Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

1st Reading:

Reflection from just reflected the hand of Zebulun and the hand of Naphtali, but in the future he will render glory on the way of the sea, on the land beyond the Jordan, the region of Galilee.

The people who walk in darkness
have seen a great light;
a light has dawned
on those who live in the land of the shadow of death.

You have enlarged the nation;
you have increased their joy;
They rejoice before you,
as people rejoice at harvest time,
as they exult in dividing the spoil.
For the yoke of their burden,
the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressors,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.

2nd Reading: 1 Cor 1:10-13, 17

I beg of you, brothers and sisters, in the name of Christ Jesus, our Lord, to agree among yourselves and do away with dissensions; please be perfectly united, with one mind and one judgment.

For I have been informed about you, my brothers and sisters, by Chloe's people, that I notice is this: some say, "I am for Paul," and others: "I am for Apollo," or "I am for Peter," or "I am for Christ." Is Christ divided or is Paul, have crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?

For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to proclaim the Gospel, and not with learned words? That would be the wrong and of the cross of Christ.

Gospel: Mt 4:12-17, 23-25

When Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee. He left Nazareth and came to settle down in Capernaum, across by the lake of Galilee, in the border of Zebulun and Naphtali.

In this way the word of the prophet Isaiah was fulfilled: Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali around by the Road of the Sea, and you who live in the Trans-Jordan, Galilee land of pagans, listen: The people who lived in darkness have seen a great light; on those who live in the land of the shadow of death, a light has dawned.

From that time on Jesus began to preach his message. "Change your ways: the kingdom of heaven is near."

Jesus went around all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the Kingdom, and curing all kinds of sickness and disease among the people.

The news about him spread through the whole of Syria, and the people brought all their sick to him, and all those who suffered the pain, the demented, the possessed, and he healed them all. Large crowds followed him from Galilee and the Ten Cities, from Jerusalem, Judea, and from across the Jordan.

Commentary:

We are called to live in the light of the Lord, to strive to the light and not in the shadow of the night. "Champion our ways" means putting away anything that does not belong to the Lord and staying away from any activity or person who would lead us astray. The follower of Jesus must make conscious decisions every day to walk in the light and not in darkness.

Those who continue to walk in darkness deceive themselves, for one day everything will be brought into the light and revealed for what it truly is. We are called to walk in the light. Praise God as you go by.

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INQUIRER

OPINION

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Queendom for a horse

EDITORIAL

FROM DAVOS-CAME CHILLY NEWS. ELDER PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has sent word that she's giving Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, the incumbent chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, an extension. She said Esperon's scheduled Feb. 9 retirement has been postponed, because "There is a reconstitution in the campaign against the NPA [New People's Army], and we expect this to snowball in the next several months, so it's very difficult to suddenly change horses when there's a momentum that we have to sustain."

Since the President assumed office, she has had nine chiefs of staff, eight of them her appointees. Let's listen to what she said during the change of command ceremony on Nov. 26, 2002: "Each of these chiefs of staff have their own distinct and remarkable personality, but I think they have one thing in common. All my choices for AFP chief of staff have shown outstanding leadership, loyalty to the Constitution, and faith in the chain of command and the commander in chief. That is why I am unperturbed by criticisms of the short tenure of the last two chiefs of staff. For it is leadership, not time that is the sole measure of command."

And let us reflect on three additional words from the commander in chief, from the same speech: "And I shall continue to judge the command only by the high standards of merit and professionalism. I believe that there is no essential relationship between the brief terms of our last two chiefs of staff on the one hand and the stability of the armed forces on the other." And she went on to say, "Our last two chiefs of staff are our best argument that the length of command is not the most relevant trait of good military leadership."

In all five years since, and in the unschedule of state civil servitude, the cuphold that policy. Only once has she seen fit to extend the term of one of them. What makes Esperon so special? From chilly Davos, the President said it wasn't because he continues to prop her up on a throne of bayonets. Rather, she said, she preferred him as a cessation-crossing meant. We suspect this is only an opening gambit to keep him on until 2009.

The Constitution, specifically Sec. 5 (3) and (7) of Article XVI, generally prohibits extensions for chiefs of staff, whose rule of duty "shall not exceed three years" except in times of war or national emergencies declared by Congress, in which case the President may extend their terms. The framers of the Constitution introduced this prohibition obviously to obviate President Ferdinand Marcos' practice of extending the terms of his AFP chiefs of staff, as he did in the case of Gen. Romeo Espino during the early years of martial law, and in the case of Gen. Fidel Ver during the twilight of his regime. Right now there is no war or national emergency, but if the government expects its anti-NPA offensive to heat up, then a future declaration could be in the cards. But until then, how to keep Esperon in the saddle?

Presidential Decree 1638, as amended by Presidential Decree 1638, established the compulsory military retirement age at 56, while granting the chief executive (at the time, Marcos) wide latitude in extending the active service of military personnel. However, the Marcos decree, while still law, is limited by the provisions of Republic Act 8186. This law declares, as official policy, that while air officers may be given fixed terms for various positions (such as chief of staff), if the reaches retirement age ahead of the end of his term, he must retire.

General Esperon was promoted to chief of staff effective July 21, 2006, when Gen. Generoso Senga reached the age of 56. Then, in legal theory, Esperon could serve until July 12, 2008. Except that he will reach the age of 56 on Feb. 9, 2008. President Arroyo ought to submit to existing jurisprudence.

But as always, she would rather explore all options that could strengthen her prerogatives beyond the existing consensus on presidential powers. As with all controversial presidential decisions, this one, we believe, is headed for resolution in the courts. This is another window the President ought never to have opened, for many observers, it readily looks onto the possibility that Esperon will be serving not just for three months more, but until 2009, for as long as his commander in chief believes that he ought to. Given the reservations and doubts surrounding his original appointment as AFP chief, we wonder how far and with the implications of such a scenario in quite peace of mind.

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Not only unfulfilled but betrayed

SEPARATE OPINION

AUGUSTO L. CZAC

But that hope has proved to be mere fantasy, Snow White looks more like the Wicked Witch today

THERE ARE TIMES—PORTUNATELY ONLY A few—when I differ with the editorials in the paper, as when is asked with the homosexuals who abused me with fisticuffs diatribes for my article criticizing use of condoms to prevent but only the virus and gaudy among those who defend and defiance the responsible members of their gender.

My daughter rose when she read it. Just like a para because she's because cuts only experiencing in opinion, although against mine. "But who is right, I would must have displeased many politicians but, like columnists, bring used to criticisms like so unlike they have not publicly class officials.

Today I was in full agreement with the Inquirer's editorial of Jan. 25 that "we must struggle to remember, in part because of those who want us to forget," (then we with President Macapagal-Arroyo's chronic creepy version of national amnesia).

Historical reconciliation is her main reason for dismissing all the countless complaints against her, beginning with her suspicious election in 2004 as established by the notorious "Hello Garci" tapes. She has been trying to turn that serious charge also nevertheless, for reason to die and keep propping up like zombie.

The real reason to raise the day repression, the unfulfilled hopes of the masses for an incorruptible and, worse, the betrayal of such hopes by the new leaders justified and flagellated by the Supreme Court for replacing the old rascals.

As my present condition worsingly points out, Jan. 20 is a day to lament, rather than celebrate, a day of disenchantment that has displaced our history by promising to redeem us from the villainy of the past, only to restore it today with more tension and hatred.

Like many veterans on that remarked day several years ago, I was filled with great excitement and expectation when people power came forward itself again and peacefully did so of another abusive government. I felt assured that the people still had the sovereign power, as in Edsa I, to prevent themselves against the threat of vampire and corruption-ridden.

It's President Macapagal-Arroyo was like a fresh wind that would cleanse the polluted atmosphere created by the Estrada administration, or so many of us believed. She was like a modern Joan of Arc (in her years before changes to usher in the nation), after she is a parody of the injured regime, a new government where the rule of law would reign supreme as envisioned by the reconstituted Constitution.

But that hope has proved to be mere fantasy. Snow White looks more like the Wicked Witch today. The country has never faced worse than now before despite the hyperbolics of the Malacañang dramaturgy.

The economy is improving according to their statistics but the people's condition is deteriorating is wonder. The crime rate has allegedly declined, but civil rights violations can be rampant and killers still flourish the streets in broad daylight. State elections and official responses are weaknesses of our governments in the eyes of the international community and the people themselves. The high hopes in the "Filipino of the People," whose rank leaders are shamelessly collected by favored supporters, friends, and sorcerers like the ZTE deal are neglected sub rosa, and public funds are embezzled for partisan indulgences.

Secretary Eduardo Ermita, the "Little President," proudly says that chaos and many other iniquities of the present administration should be recognized as the "duration of history." The metaphor is unlowering and deceptive. The misdeeds are rarely accidents described as lashed up on a President's Bon Ami since prior eons, will address the horde of corruption viruses that will outlived Malacañang and all its habitants in a tempest of arrogance and irresponsibility.

Freely from the undeserved pardon, Joseph Estrada is crowing that his replacement by GMA has allowed him to resume misdeeds to himself has never committed. The very accusations looks, indeed, like intriguing from the wrong but into such a way. But then there's never that he should not have been removed at all because GMA has been proved to be worse. She has have not absolved his. The has to that bench of those have betrayed the people's confidence and equally deserves to be eliminated.

It is, to say another word running, she put rolling the lowie black. Both Estrada and Arroyo come from the same misdeeds famine era. Just who have distilled out way of life and championed the high-echoes of our people that before made us one of the highest-reserved countries in Asia and the world. And to think that both of them want to return to their unsolved power, to remain it, the former again as president and the latter as president or prime minister, may result in new Democracy. We say phrase "No" to another "same same" villainy, anywhere again!

Clarity

MOMENTS

Fr. Jerry M. Orbos, SVD

Unless life is seen as a mission, it could end up to be just an empty pursuit of self-satisfaction and self-gratification

LAST SUNDAY, I WENT TO A BOOKSTORE to check if my latest book "Just a Minute" was already available in our area. I asked the salesclerk:

"Do you already have the latest book of Father Orbos?"

"What is its title? Just a moment, sir," the salesclerk replied as she pressed on to type while she checked.

...

In today's Gospel (Mk. 6, 14-17), we are told that Jesus, after leaving Nazareth His hometown, began preaching in Capernaum by the sea. He then began to upload, and people began to say to Him a great deal. "If this did not happen in, just a moment. It was a result of His diligence, determination and charity of purpose in doing the Father's will. Unless life is seen as a mission, it could end up to be just an empty pursuit of self-satisfaction and self-gratification.

...

"Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand!" This message is a very urgent and a very timely reminder for all of us individually and as a nation. Praying and praising that our government officials will really listen and heed God's call for true conversion. It's sad that most of our leaders have become rigid and unmoved. Money and power have made them insensitive.

As we go through life, what message are we proclaiming? And when we are gone what message will we have behind? What awareness are you making in the world with your words and with your (we) life?

...

If you had the choice, what words would you like to be written on your grave to best describe you? Allí is by: "Here lies ... who loved much! ... who worked much! ... who accumulated much! ... who showed much?

...

We are happy with our brother priest Fr. Bernardo Suarez and his years filled healing ministry. What makes us doubly happy is his clarity of vision and intention, pointing not to himself but to God whom he serves as the source of his amazing "gift." In doing so a person becomes truly "incline to believe God, that's why will be no confusion about such representations and gifts.

...

When we congratulated our Awesome God "Amang" Bil Buddie for having been named as "Filipino of the Year" by the Philippine Daily Inquirer, his reply is very clear: "Thank you, and simple: "Thank you. To God be the glory. We are just doing our ministry." So humble, unlike some you know who take and make every opportunity to boast about their so-called achievements (if there are there at all).

...

Here's a wonderful and timely reminder for us pilgrims and travelers in this world: "Do not go through life, build not a traffic on Temptation Avenue. Avoid the future because it's a dead end. Burn up Regretsy Street. Disregard Lane. Bankbreak Boulevard. Sue have no pass through Guilt Avenue. Run that's all right because Victory Road is straight up ahead. Enjoy your journey!"

...

On Jan. 31, 2008, at 7 p.m., we will be at the Sacred Heart Church in Cubao for a Healing Mass with 10-year-old Mitzi girl Reina Santiago, and on Feb. 1, we will be in Ortigas Mixed College of Calapan for a mixed healing-raising concern.

...

A moment with the Lord

Lord, as I grow up, instill in me clarity of vision and intention. Amen.

Concurring and dissenting

WITH DUE RESPECT

Artemio V. Panganiban

I THINK THE SUPREME COURT ACTED WISELY in requiring the government to comment on the petition filed by (1) broadcast journalists, led by Gus Abelgas, Jr., who challenged their arrest and detention as an aftermath of the Peninsula Manila hotel siege. That the Court did not issue a writ of amparo (but merely required a comment) indicates that the correct legal remedy is a petition for prohibition, not amparo. I agree.

Deadlock preempted dangers. When grave constitutional issues are raised, the high tribunal has normally tended to overlook procedural technicalities and looks at the substance of the controversy. Unfortunately, the petition on procedure is grounds would have merely delayed the case. After hearing, and the petition is left, I am convinced that it has sufficient allegations to be deemed a petition for prohibition.

Nothing the case on its merits augurs well for the democracy. Even the responsible officials, notably Interior Secretary Rafaelito Puno and PNP Director General Hermogenes Ebdane, have publicly expressed judicial impatience on the petitioners' invocation of the rights to speech, to assembly and freedom of the petitioners, and, the validity of the media advisory issued by the Department of Justice, warning that journalists might incur criminal liability if they disobeyed orders from police authorities in the "negotiation process."

Similar caveats. I also concur with the Supreme Court's refusal to name special courts to try contemptuous related to terrorism, particularly those involving violations of the Human Security Act (R.A. No. 9372), which empowers the courts to create these special courts because the regular courts can still handle terrorism cases.

Be that as it may, I believe there is somewhat insufficient basis for the denial. There are pending petitions to declare that the HSA is unconstitutional. The Court's creation of these courts at this time could be interpreted, rightly or wrongly, as a signal that the HSA is valid in every respect, thereby necessitating the creation of these special tribunals.

Impeachment ground. With due respect, however, I disagree with the Supreme Court ruling in the Presidential Electoral Tribunal or PET) resolution junking the election protest of Sen. Loren Legarda. The lack of legal and factual basis" of the ruling is the Court, I would have joined Justice Antonio T. Carpio in dismissing the protest on the sole ground of "abandonment." By citing her with extreme legarda "effectively abandoned" her protest against Vice President Teofisto Guingona.

The Carpio opinion finds basis in an earlier PET decision dismissing, on the same ground of abandonment, the protest of Miriam Defensor-Santiago questioning the election of President Fidel V. Ramos in 1992. After Santiago made her position as senator following her election to that office in 1995, the PET held that even if she were the protest, she could not have satisfied the presidential office since she already opted to become a senator of the republic. In short, the protest was moot and academic.

By citing Santiago, the "Carpio-sentencia" opposed the election tribunal (EBC) used in the proclamation of Vice President Guingona. Unfortunately, simple because of the "presumption of regularity in the performance of official duty" the PET ignored the fact this time Ella were markedly different from the other. Ella duplicates held by other electoral agencies, like the Commission on Elections. Unless the discrepancies are satisfactorily explained, the presumption of regularity is repeatedly refuted, without final application.

Furthermore, this ruling may have unduly prejudiced Legarda from using the proponderance of the allegedly forged Ella. This fact is material in adding any electoral protest of Estrada. Finally, I believe that the Court should have refrained from "talking too much" and from ruling on matters that were controversial and unnecessary in the disposition of the case.

I feel the PET dismissed the protest simply on the ground of abandonment; it could have avoided controversies from Senator Legarda. Even more important, the resolution would have been freed of any partisan overtones, and the PET of suspicions of political partiality.

Malicious Constitution. The Belarus State University and the Belarus Pen have arts commissioning the 100th anniversary of the promulgation of the Malolos Constitution by sponsoring a special lecture series on its history, ideology and salient provisions of the Filipino-created Republic-ruled law.

The antique lectures are being moderated daily (Mon. 25 to Jan. 30) in the national language. Top cultural lecturers include Chief Justice Hilario G. Puno, Supreme Court justices Artemio V. Panganiban, Minita V. Chico-Nazario and Ruben T. Reyes, as well as former Senate President Jovito R. Salonga and retired Court of Appeals Justice Jose C. de la Rama. I have been invited to speak on the topic of "Separation of Church and State" on Jan. 29 at 9 a.m.

UPW awards. Of the from all over the world nominate to post in their pages. Because of the short universe of e-mail she is receiving, Dr. Gabrielle Lynch, Sussex University, U.K., who agreed to collate and analyze those awards and suggestions for submission to President Macapagal-Arroyo, has created a special e-mail address devoted solely to UPW awards. Henceforth, please use this account: e.united.awards@gmail.com is coming his with ways to use.

* * *

Comments are welcome at chrilbar@pacgenet.com.ph/@hotmail.com.

Standoff

THE ETHICS OF JOURNALISM ARE ILLEGAL. THE JOURnalist is a witness, not a participant in a story. We die story from the correspondents at the Peninsula Manila siege showed us journalists as cowards, stupid, negligent, unreliable as events like national lunch of cadavers as the stress of their colleagues. Their presence in this most beautiful and hushed away in their own tainted naked carcasses as modern industry—as you can and partake in if they were the victims, or the cause of the story, as if their cause were more important.

REBEL WITHOUT A CLUE

Patricia Evangelista

"The Rizal paper and the airwaves are filled with the debate under the name of safely covering conflict situations and any allegations of civilian misconduct during the Peninsula Manila uprising," says Cabinet Secretary Ricardo Saludo.

And yet, journalistic ethics do not cover situations that include demonstrated harassment, unlawful arrest and intimidation, when, for example, journalists are denied things because they are the logic. 27 percent in Manila, he became a convict. Discussing the circumstances of a government that slaughtered monks in a peaceful rally, when prominent Russian journalist Anna Politkovskaya was found murdered in a Moscow elevator, her name was repeated in headlines all over the world. And when Indira Ratnam was arrested for publishing his indictments. Mr. Ratnam, a man instrumental on the list on him five violence against anyone is always news. Violence against the journalist is doubly so, simply because his death, arrest or disappearance signals violence against the freedom of those he serves, rendering the journalistic structure she needs that he is bound to speak.

And still Saludo has the gall to demand that "the present, not retail by publicity, be applied to any evidence and charges of unlawful acts during the uprising."

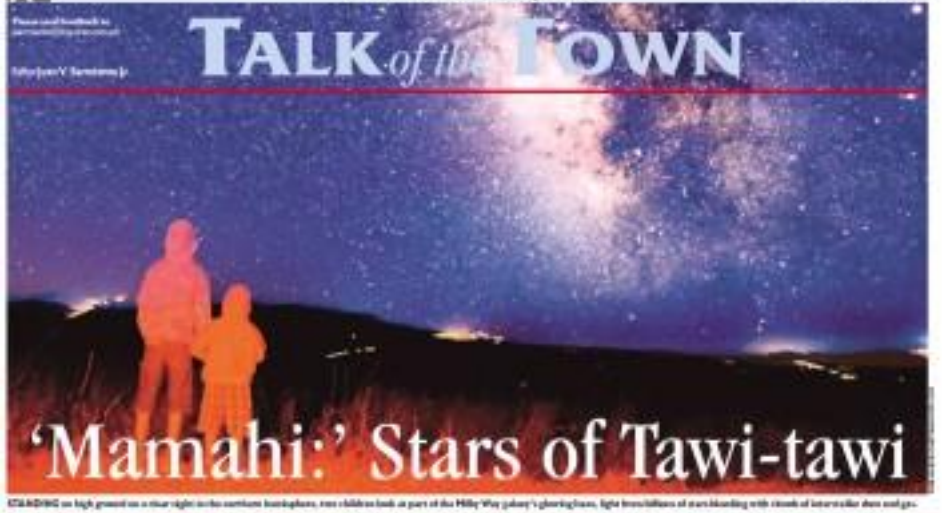
It was the Philippine Standard Price, after all, that shoved out the process by arresting journalists without making them their rights and without only informing them of what crime they committed. It was the PNP and their supporters who insisted to public forums that the arrests were justified and would be repeated again if necessary. It was Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno who said that the journalists were arrested for "precautionary and protective reasons to stop" for "intervention of justice." It was Puno who failed to justify why these same journalists were not charged with crimes, and that was PNP Chief Superintendent Ramon Rubio who said that "We are not arresting that story," and yet refused to name the reporters.

Perhaps it would be best for Secretary Saludo to remember that "the right of individual men" cannot be dealt with in some vague "interest of national unity" because he dealt with in some vague "interest of national unity" because he dealt with in some vague "interest of national unity" because he

Please send feedback to jamesyu@inquirer.com.ph

Tofel Jayson V. Sarmiento Jr.

TALK of the TOWN



'Mamahi:' Stars of Tawi-tawi

STANDING on high ground on a clear night in the northern hemisphere, two children look as part of the Milky Way galaxy's glowing base, light from billions of stars blending with clouds of interstellar dust and gas.

THE PHILIPPINE ETHNOBOTANICAL, GEOPOLITICAL AND ALTHOMOROUS SERVICES ADMINISTRATION (Pigeon) is asking the public to help it compile local legends about celestial objects for education and tourism purposes. The compilation will be submitted to the International Astronomical Union in 2009, which has been declared the International Year of Astronomy to mark the 400th year of the first astronomical observation through a telescope by Galileo.

"I will be on hand for us to show to the world how stars or celestial bodies shaped our culture or beliefs," said Cynthia Criddle, chief of Pigeon's astronomy research and development section.

Responding to Pigeon's appeal, *Talk of the Town* is discussing a literary professor's study of how the rhythms of the seasons are seen and remembered in their daily lives—hunting, planting, fishing and gathering.

Early Filipinos have a rich knowledge of the seasons. Certain indigenous groups in the country, mostly their elders, retain this knowledge, which they believe ought to be recorded or passed on to the next generation.

Aliens' preoccupation with celestial bodies, particularly stars, is partly due to his affinity with them. Scientists have concluded that without the life and death of stars, most of us on Earth today. There are stars that exploded long ago (atoms) like oxygen, calcium, iron and zinc found in the human body. All

By Dante L. Andrade

BUSILAK ATULIN, BUSILAK... this is how various groups in the country call a star. Or a comet. Or a constellation. Or a meteor. Or a star cluster. Or a galaxy. Or a nebula. Or a star nursery. Or a supernova. Or a black hole. Or a white dwarf. Or a red giant. Or a blue supergiant. Or a yellow dwarf. Or a brown dwarf. Or a neutron star. Or a pulsar. Or a quasar. Or a gamma-ray burst. Or a dark matter. Or a dark energy. Or a multiverse. Or a parallel universe. Or a wormhole. Or a time machine. Or a warp drive. Or a hyperspace. Or a tesseract. Or a fourth dimension. Or a fifth dimension. Or a sixth dimension. Or a seventh dimension. Or an eighth dimension. Or a ninth dimension. Or a tenth dimension. Or an eleventh dimension. Or a twelfth dimension. Or a thirteenth dimension. Or a fourteenth dimension. Or a fifteenth dimension. Or a sixteenth dimension. Or a seventeenth dimension. Or an eighteenth dimension. Or a nineteenth dimension. Or a twentieth dimension. Or a twenty-first dimension. Or a twenty-second dimension. Or a twenty-third dimension. Or a twenty-fourth dimension. Or a twenty-fifth dimension. Or a twenty-sixth dimension. Or a twenty-seventh dimension. Or an eighteenth dimension. Or a nineteenth dimension. Or a twentieth dimension. Or a twenty-first dimension. Or a twenty-second dimension. Or a twenty-third dimension. Or a twenty-fourth dimension. Or a twenty-fifth dimension. Or a twenty-sixth dimension. Or a twenty-seventh dimension.

THE ARCHER is a top asterism for hunting by early Filipinos. A group of stars that members of the Sama-Bajau tribe in the Tawi-tawi area of Mindanao call Busilak (The Archer) and South America's Mocha and Chiriguano tribes call Chuma is a kind of chevron to locate north. [Circling] groups in the Philippines without the constellations as a guide for locating and living in Sarangani.

Busilak (Tawi-tawi) by Andrade

City residents

It is unfortunate that city-bred dwellers like us have almost no chance to acquire the knowledge of the heavens which our forefathers possessed. While astronomy and astronomers built upon the knowledge of the ancients, the celestial among us have become the exclusive domain of our astronomical lore.

Some might have heard of Orion but not Bintuk or Balatik. Perhaps few see the Pleiades (Matariki to Bontoc Igorots, Pleiades to Ifugao, Big Dipper but not Kabig or the Mukimukim Group, and Southern Cross but not Bunsuran. Although on occasions, they might have heard of Bulang Mauro (Orion's belt), Tagaro or Buntos (Pleiades) or Kiss na Bituin (Southern Cross), these come to us only with the advent of Christmas.

In learning science anomalous, we could have and held on when we already have and when it is too, still being used on them in the field. Thus, we assume that we already have and when it is too, still being used on them in the field.

Bihar old our foundations think about where they looked at the heavens? Why did they acquire the stars into groups and named them after specific objects in their immediate milieu? What prompted them to believe that stars influence their lives? How come people still hang on to these beliefs?

Pursuing these questions means venturing into the realm of a people's culture. It requires getting into the subjective terrain of knowledge. A system which is a group of people closely tied up in the course of time in a continuing connection with nature. It enabled the group to survive in the past and continues to cultivate its way of thinking and seeing as persons.

Treasury of knowledge

We often look down on this knowledge as a hodgepodge of superstitions which are regarded as primitive and without scientific basis. Still we are astounded by the rich treasury of knowledge of indigenous peoples when we come in front of it and which we cannot. When it turns so. Hands on have some solid basis and logic of its own. Are look at modern medicine as it engages the ultimate indigenous knowledge of medicinal herbs.

The Native possess their own knowledge of the stars. Like other people of the world, they long ago divided them into groups, "assigning upon man's imagination to classify and organize things to better grasp and understand them.

Crab, stingray

Star groups are named after objects which are familiar to a particular culture. Thus, in naming stars, a particular group of people puts an own mark—its own culture—on the sky map, plots with stories that also bear its identity.

In their heavens "named" for the stars of Tawi-tawi to display the characteristics of a culture. Sagittarius, the Archer, is known as Busilak (Tausug), Mamahi (Sug), Bunsi, Sabuyang, Bulu, and Anahilan are all referred to one star by their names, one and activity.

Kagang is a crab, pagi is a stingray while Bunsi is a pablo fish. Sabuyang is a dumpy-pronged spear used to catch fish while Bulu is a triangular basket. Anahilan is a fish-stream pound to spear a puffer fish with its spreading.

Spear trap

Besides Sabuyang, the Sama plants in the eyelash and lines in the mountains. Thus, they have Sabuk, a coconut tree, in the sky. They also have Bubu for its enormous which is also a spear trap used to harpoon wild pigs. It is the most prominent spectacle in the Philippines and is called Bulanik, Bilaud, Bayabad and Bubu by various ethnic groups. (See illustration.)

While people past down much on the stars by grouping and naming them, there still is new influence there from. Until as mariners, they keep navigation charts to locate the people in their aquatic in the night as clues sky.

Planting

The Samas consult Bubu, Pallayuan and Salaka in planning their crops. Their agreement and location as various stars coincide with conditions favorable for each stage of harvest farming.

While some variation, kamagin farming in the Philippines is done during the months of December to May. The land to be farmed is chosen and cleared from December to February. Burning is done in April and May when it starts to rain. Hardly could one plant with the onset of the rainy season.

Farmers in Tinaycanri note the clock position to indicate the exact location in the sky. It is as it which when a star is seen to the east or in the west and is at 12 o'clock when it is in the zenith.

From Lubu and due the clearing of the farms should start when Bubu appears at 10 at night. This is around December to January. Burning should start when it is already at 11:30 when stars. This is done February to March. Planting is done when it starts to rain around April to May or before. Bubu appears ready to rise in the west at night. After the first heavy rain, the farmers are ready to plant seeds.

Clearing, burning

While burn is considered a nightfall, Bubu rise is used as a marker in clearing and burning is done when Bubu rises appears in the east at midnight, called tanumangan (Christmas) and malambong tanum (May). Bubu rises at 10 o'clock. This is from January to April. It is time to plant when it is at 8 o'clock. Bubu rises in the west when it starts to rain. This is until April to May.

Aside from Bubu and Pulyuan, Bubu is also used as a marker in choosing coconut. The Sama believe that a coconut tree bears fruit quickly when planted at a time when Salaka appears low on the eastern horizon at midnight. It will bear fruit in 5 years if planted when it is already at late or at the zenith after sunset.

Fishing

When Bubu rise in the east, outside the rectangular trap Bubu, they set down their own fish traps into the sea, believing that they will have a good catch. The appearance of more stars indicates good weather, which may be one reason for the good catch.

Mr. Sama Dilaut informants said that the position of the stars, which begin to appear, to pull up the bubu out of the sea, indicated the strength of the current. Those stars from the handle of the Big Dipper. When they are in the east, the current is strong but when they are in the west, the current is weak so there is no current at all.

Direction finding

Several stars, together with the sun, are used in direction finding. Samas know that the morning star Lihiput Maga is in the east, Bubu and Mamahi Ubun are in the north, while Bunsi is in the south.

The western direction is reckoned with stars Tanggal Bahang and Mamahi Magih. Unknown, usually Tahud to identify direction. The same goes with Mamahi Sinan (the setting sun). Of course, the east-west direction is easily identifiable with the aid of the sun which is also a star. For the same reason, the Samas use the obscure Bubu and Maga which are near the sky from east to the zenith to the west.

Together with stars, winds are also used to track direction. Amihan are winds of the south wind, is associated with Bunsi, the asterism named after a pablo fish. The heavenly fish releases the arc from its belly usually starts to study its seasonal appearance in the night sky. That star is coarse or valorous.

Other asterisms, which fall from Bunsi, are coarse and good, the north wind called amanis, associated with Bubu. Another familiar for amanis is the appearance of Maga in the east at nightfall. It is also amanis that blows when the northern stars of Bubu get dimmer. Its northern cloud about is to amanis' coming also.

To take note of these subtle changes, one must be very knowledgeable about the stars, attentive to environmental changes in the environment. A characteristic which the Samas perceive to consider any their coming.

Seafaring

Samas are vessel seafarers. They even invented the shape of the outriger of Bubu as the widest across the seas. Their use of celestial navigation is then beginning to show unmistakable and unparalleled.

Mamahi Orion is a prominent navigational star. This is the month when it remains "steady" as like some stars which change position as they cross the sky from east to west, according to Samas lines. Using this as a guide, one may reach Gorontalo and Zamboanga by sailing northeast, Celebes to the Moluccas in the Indonesian and Sulawesi in Indonesia southeast with some necessary adjustments along the way.

Bunsi is used in crossing the Sulu Sea from Maguan near Palawan to the capital town of Bongao on the Tawi-tawi mainland. To reach Bongao, the pilot sails on constructed west-east loop Bunsi was aligned—from east to west and stands on the top of the middle finger—to the left of the bright point. If the pilot veers to the left of a dinghuli, it will reach Langaan located which is in the southern end of Tawi-tawi. If to the right, the boat will land at Sibutu which is at the southern end of the archipelago.

Cardinal directions

One of the most experienced mariners of Pangkalan Bangsa, another Tawi-tawi municipality, is Angalimas Jumbaran. He uses five stars to track the cardinal directions—Mataga for the east, Tanggal Bahang and Mamahi Magih for the west, Mamahi Ubun for the north, and Mamahi Sinan for the south.

As long as one knows the position of Mamahi Sinan and Mamahi Sinan and the relative position of one's destination, one could easily be there. The pilot has to be aware by the boat moving to Sapakuan. This is easily and also done because one must expect the navigator(s) during a trip. Like when he desired always to the Celebes but after he navigate broke down between Sibutu and the Tawi-tawi mainland. He or someone like this, no one would be of help.

All these are but a few, a very small part, of Tawi-tawi's astronomical lore. Indeed, there is much to be learned not only from the Samas but also from other groups in the country. Aware of this fact, we will not only be enjoying the sky when we look at it at night. We will also be reading—and will be reminded of—our own past and culture.

(Dante Andrade, Ph.D., is a professor at the Department of Linguistics of the University of the Philippines Diliman.)

Across the NATION
Asian Editor Tony Bergonia

AFP probes 'ugly American' incident

ZAMBOANGA CITY—AUTHORITIES ARE TRYING to prevent cities of US military presence in Mindanao from stoking anti-American sentiments following a car accident involving a US soldier who left a calling card before he abandoned his victim.

Sgt. Buenaventure Espinosa, Armed Forces of the Philippines spokesman for Western Mindanao, said the US soldier left the scene of the accident, one of the gates of the Edwin Andrews Airbase, after the vehicle he was riding in slammed into a passing motorcycle and injured the man riding it, Dante Clemente, a resident of Sitio Lubigan village.

The accident took place Wednesday.

SPO1 Nardo de Leon, police investigator, said Clemente was passing by the gates of the airbase when the vehicle carrying the still unidentified US soldier came out and slammed into Clemente's motorcycle.

The US-issued vehicle bore license plate RH1918.

Police quoted Clemente as saying the first instinct of helping him, the US soldier simply left a card bearing the name PFC/ITE Jason Lee of the Joint Special Operations Task Force Philippines, the group rumored to oversee undercover exercises between Philippine and US military forces.

The American soldier said, left the accident site as if nothing happened after leaving the card.

De Leon said the US soldier did not pay for Clemente's medical expenses.

"Accidents can happen to anybody and I know they are law-abiding citizens," Espinosa said in defense.

But Lt. Gen. Hermon Aliaga, Western Mindanao Command chief, said the American soldier had already met Clemente on Friday.

Aliaga refused to say what took place in the meeting, but said the case was a simple police matter.

Police have have been trying to trace the identity of the US soldier.

US soldiers have been detained in the city since the first deployment in late summer 2002.

The deployment was being opposed by militant groups, which cited abuses allegedly committed by US forces in recent years.

The latest accusations were made by Abdul Lakkian, chair of the Panamao Municipal Disaster Council.

Lakkian complained that US soldiers, led by a Maj. Ron Berg, ordered the closure of the hospital at night.

Lakkian said the order was issued by Lt. Col. Jose Ito.

She said Berg warned that anybody who would defy the order will be shot on sight.

Jude Alipala with a report from Inquirer Mindanao

Carabao may be key to biofuel, says scientist

By Arsenio Rogue
Inquirer Central Luzon

THE CARABAO (or CARABAO MANGO) is known for its ability to subsist on low quality forage.... (ARSENIO TAN-MANSUETO)

SCIENCE CITY OF MUÑOZ—Here's look-area bun-the lowly carabao might not hold the key to the commercial production of biofuel in the country.

The bovine, once a crowning Filipino-American coastal, provides the model as well as the "biofuel legacy" for the conversion of raw starchy and sweet-to-ethanol, an alternative to crude-oil-based fuels.

"The carabao as a paradigm in converting lignocellulose to ethanol," said Dr. Fredilo Abasolo, a professor emeritus of animal and veterinary sciences at Cal Poly Pomona University in California.

"It has remain fluid when regurgitated cud, helps maintain the rubble and stone and other biomass into bioethanol," he said.

Bioethanol is a light alcohol produced by fermenting sugarcane, corn, cassava and sago. It is used as a fuel for motor vehicles mixed for instance with diesel and gasoline under the Biofuels Act.

The theoretical basis for the, admits Abasolo, discussed in a lecture at the Institute of Genetic Engineering of the Central Luzon State University here, was validated by experiments conducted at the Philippine Carabao Center (PCC).

"The experiments confirmed the ability of the animal's to produce ethanol using manure microorganism in fed silage for manure, followed by yeasts in the feed fermenting silage," he said.

Abasolo, who obtained his doctoral degree in animal sciences at Cornell University in Ithaca, N.Y., in 1976, worked for many years as regional swine specialist in Manitoba, Canada, and at the Dairy Training and Research Institute of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. before migrating to California State Polytechnic University.

He retired at 55 years old in that university in 2005 and is now engaged in various private enterprises in the United States.

Abasolo proliferated with the discovery of lignocellulosic-fermenting, cud-inside, from the CLSU in 2000. He was among the first Filipinos staying abroad who responded to the government's Biofuels Scientist program in 1976.

"My encounter the manure-fluid from the rumen of carabao's many years for commercial production of ethanol from biomass," he told the Inquirer before returning to the states on Jan. 16.

Carabao as paradigm

In his lecture at the CLSU, Abasolo said the carabao is a model for a way to convert lignocellulose to ethanol. Lignocellulose is the woody material produced on earth and is found in all plants.

Converting this molecule to alcohol using yeast-fed enzymes, chemical and physical hydrolysis (or chemical breakdown) is too expensive under Philippine conditions, Abasolo said.

"The carabao is known for its ability to subsist on low-quality forage, including rice stubble and weeds. This ability is evidenced upon the animal by the manure that digests cellulose and hemicellulose, turning them into methane and volatile fatty acids (VFAs)," Abasolo said.

The methane, by itself, is expelled when the carabao belches while the VFAs are provided between the feed that and the microorganisms.

"The best animal uses the VFAs as a source of energy. The microorganisms use the carbon dioxide in the rumen gaseous phase," he said.

Abasolo said the feasibility of the method, as suggested by the carabao paradigm, has been validated in experiments conducted by the PCC.

He said the manure fluid was lignocellulose into fermentable carbohydrates and the fermentable carbohydrates can be used into alcohol using common yeast.

Abasolo, who conducted the experiment with PCC scientist Pedro Flaviano, said because of the promising results of the experiment they submitted a patent application to the Philippine and technology scientist in energy research and development.

"We have no illusion about winning any prize due to limited scope of the project but its submission to local development that the first research in the area was conducted at PCC and CLSU," Abasolo said.

Good yield

He said preliminary calculations from tests in the wet season months have indicated that as much as 117 liters of alcohol can be distilled from 1,000 kg of biomass materials.

Given the natural abundance of lignocellulosic in the area of 85 percent ethanol ten thousand liters would be possible, he said.

"There is now a technology for the conversion of cellulose using engineered to PPV as an ethanol cost, he said.

The mentioned experiment 5 percent fermented blood meal and 5 percent fermented blood in all dried and powdered feeds have become controversial of late because of the existence of Mad Dairy cow in dominant, UK, Mainland Mickel.

Mickel said investment in biofuel development a "counterproductive" as producing biofuel would entail land use entail clearing a forest that would destroy brush, variety and exist trees carbon absorbers.

Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago, author of the Biofuels Act, sought more government con-

"The carabao is known for its ability to subsist on low quality forage...."

sultation before the measure was signed into law.

Abasolo, however, said the lignocellulose in the carabao's manure is not harmful to humans.

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SPECIAL REPORT

NEWSBRIEFS

Bagsik flyover opens sans GMA

BAGUIO CITY—Public Works Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. announced yesterday he saw the controversial Bagsik flyover yesterday, without President Macapagal-Arroyo in her two and three days before the supposed "ribbon-cutting" ends on Jan. 28.

Instead of driving through the flyover, Ebdane and officials of the Baguio District of Public Works and Highways walked through its 250-meter span before returning to Metro Manila.

Making reference to the controversy generated by its construction, Ebdane said it would be up to the public now to judge whether the flyover would indeed solve the city's traffic woes.

The project went among opposition from former Mayors for giving the go-signal despite "concrete violations of personnel accreditation and bounding the project's funding. It was originally planned among P44 million to cost coming from the Japanese-funded northern section of Marcos Highway.

The DPWH, it was stated, said it actually had P73 million to overlap from the highway project that was completed for the flyover.

Dianne Esmeralda with a report from Ellaine Cabreza Inquirer Northern Luzon

Japan airline plans to use DMIA

CLARK FREEPORT—Japan Airlines executives have inspected the Diosdado Macapagal International Airport there, planning to use the former United States military facility as an alternate airport during emergencies.

The JAL delegation visited the air traffic control tower, cargo and passenger terminal, weather station, passenger terminal, ground-handling services, etc. flight-planning facility and Lahmeyer's refueling service during its Thursday visit, according to Bienvenido Abaya, vice president for operations of the state-owned Clark International Airport Corp.

Abaya said guests the 2,500-hectare aviation complex's terminal has been remodeled and is due for completion in March. The could serve their daily commercial flights to Japan.

He said the DMIA's first-ever 2 project, which would accommodate eight million passengers yearly, would start in June.

Rosalie Dirain, Inquirer Central Luzon

3 more Transco towers bombed

ILIGAN CITY—Unidentified armed men bombed three more transmission towers of The National Transmission Corp., bringing to eight the total number of towers that were destroyed in the past week.

Engineer Emmanuel Mendiones, acting Transco area president for Mindanao, yesterday said the fresh attacks occurred early Friday.

Mendiones said unidentified perpetrators bombed towers No. 33 in Baroy, Lanao del Sur; tower No. 8 in Buug, Lanao del Norte, and tower No. 104 in Baloyong, Pikit in the same area between 4 a.m. and 5 a.m.

He said repair crews were sent to the bombed towers.

Police said the attack could be related to Transco's refusal to pay taxes to rebels.

Global Dipal, Inquirer Mindanao

4 fishermen rescued

BALIWAG (CITY)—Four fishermen were rescued in waters near the coast of Limasawa Island on Wednesday night.

Rey Gaspar, administrative officer of the Office of Civil Defense in Eastern Visayas, identified the rescued fishermen as Richard Pesas, 20; Jun Perez, 25; Jesse Bolanos, 22; and Ryan Bontilo, 18, all residents of Punta Finit, Barangay New Bohol-Bol, Bongol Island.

Jong E. Cabilao Inquirer Visayas

Escape from new jail probed

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Zamboanga del Norte Gov. Rolando Yebes said he ordered an investigation of Thursday's escape of seven prisoners from the newly renovated jail of Manukan town.

Senior Supt. Mario Tangco Zamboanga del Norte police chief said the escapees dried up their cells steel bars and "took advantage of the heavy rains and a power outage."

The escapees were Rodolfo Dagohoy, serving term rape to robbery.

Tangco said he considered believe the escapees were able to destroy the steel bars of their cells as the facility was "newly built."

"We suspected the structure to be very strong," he said.

Julie Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao

Red Cross opens new building in Sulu

JOLO, Sulu—The Philippine National Red Cross (PNRC) inaugurated its newly renovated building here on Tuesday.

The renovation was funded by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

Alan Gilbert Sicat the ICRC, who supervised the construction, said Red Cross workers and volunteers now have a bigger place to work in with the refurbished building.

Ed Gamad, Inquirer Mindanao

21 Korean factory workers hurt in clash with cops

CALAMBA CITY—TWENTY ONE workers protesting alleged abuses of the Korean-owned Magic Footwear Inc. in Calbayog, Laguna were injured in a clash with policemen who were trying to break up their picket last Friday.

More than 300 workers have been holding a picket since Thursday in front of the company inside the Batchelder Industrial Subdivision alleging unfair labor practices against the management of the Korean-owned factory.

Christopher Cajudoan, vice-president of the union Sadiwa ng Manggagawang Isinag sa Hindu Tinatanda Unaliliwa', said the labor dispute between workers of Calbayog police and the Laguna Industrial Park police attacked the picket line after negotiations between the leaders of Hindu workers and the management failed.

The negotiations were held in the presence of a labor arbiter.

During the meeting, the management asked the workers to stop the picket as the ban prohibits users to hold a dialogue on Monday.

The workers, however, did not agree, resulting in the commotion and alleged violent dispersal.

The police took control of the Hindu gates after the dispersal, but protesters also regrouped and held a rally to condemn action of the "violent dispersal."

As of late yesterday afternoon, the workers were back in the picket line in front of the factory gate with policemen surrounding them.

Cabayao police chief Supt. Ricardo Dela Cruz said in a phone interview that there was no violent dispersal.

"We were only trying to stop the workers insisting to get inside the subdivision. These were even policemen hurt in the incident," he said.

He said they got a request from the owners of the subdivision to convince the workers not to hold a picket in the place because other lines were allowed.

Benjie prudence Hontiveros, cocktail director and pastor, in-charge of the said workers in Hindu Tinatanda and alcohols that it reports to the United States.

The workers were striking for the regularization of contractual workers, reinstatement of 200 workers illegally terminated by the company, and a wage increase to their P195 daily wage.

Rosalie Hontiveros, Andrea spokesperson, said she and her bosses in the night time and left elbow as the police shoved her in the chest.

Cajudoan said the police should be held liable for the violent dispersal.

Ariel Inton Hontiveros, the local support for protecting workers since Friday.

But Popolnan dismissed allegations police were preventing food from getting in the workers.

Asked if they have plans to disassemble their machines' pulled, he said police will take action until they receive a court order to the company. Silka Gerber San Cadiz, Inquirer Southern Luzon

INQUIRER Mindanao

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SULTAN KUDARAT has ambitions that local officials say could be developed for ecotourism purposes.

Sultan Kudarat town aims for nat'l recognition

By Noel B. Maulana
Author Replaced, Sharif Kabuntalan

SULTAN KUDARAT TOWN IN Sharif Kabuntalan is the only local government unit in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao to have reached the finals of this year's Gawad Galing Pook award.

Mayor Hapih Hamza-Sandla attributed the effort to the town's programs on transparency through its information and communication technology (ICT). Sultan Kudarat passed the regional and national level searches, screening and site validation visits conducted by the Gawad Galing Pook Foundation Inc.

The ICT system helped make transparent to the public the fiscal and program accountabilities of officials, as well as Cooperatives in the municipal government.

The Top Ten (GG) Gawad Galing Pook recognition will be announced here this month.

Success story

Mariam Sandla said she presented her town's ICT success story to a recent panel forum and individual interviews with the Board of Judges of the Ateneo de Manila University. She credited the Local Government Support Program in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (LGSPA) of the Canada International Development Agency for ICT development.

Sandla then said she hardly a Muslim-run (GG) making it to the national 48, Shalom Villanueva, LGSPA field program manager, said national representatives in the Muslim region were also searching for an ARMM indigenous equivalent of the Gawad Galing Pook annual award—"one which could be acceptable to Muslim tribal groups in the region."

The ARMM is composed of the provinces of Basilan, Lanao Del Maguindanao, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi, and the cities of Marawi and Lamitan.

Starting 247 LGUs nationwide, Mariam Sandla said her town, named after the 17th-century Muslim hero Sultan Muhammad Dipatuan Kudarat I, should be noted for its rich historical roots.

Filipino historian Ambeth Ocampo said he was saddened that local historians and officials decided to place Rizal and's monument in Catalunan City to the left side of by Jose Rizal's, and "not inside or stand on equal footing" and face-to-face with the city's monument of the national hero.

'King of Mindanao'

Ocampo had reason to criticize the decision in his speech during the 2005 monument unveiling ceremony: "The Filipino national pride in Sultan Kudarat, known to 16th Century Spanish chroniclers, including Francisco Combes, as the "King of Mindanao," who repelled 11 Spanish expeditions to Mindanao. Basilan and Jolo from Sultanate territory on Sulu Island.

Historians since Rizal's generation link with Kudarat through the national hero's annotation of the Spanish book, "Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas" (Events in the Philippine Islands) by Antonio de Morga.

Rizal defended Kudarat's uncle Rajah Matanguan who was accused of "treachery" in Morga's book for the killing of Captain Esteban Rodriguez de Figueroa, leader of the first Spanish expedition to Mindanao in 1596.

The late Mars Saturnino, Dr. Alunan Glang said Rizal was known of such "historical fact" and that by disputing Morga, Rizal then answered the act of Spanish authorities in his essay in Madrid.

Perseverance makes this former OFW succeed in own business

By Ramon Jaspe Sarabosing
Butuan City

ENGINEER-INVENTOR RODELIO Cane, 47, has come a long way from a one-room bamboo cacong maker to manager of his own factory.

This former overseas worker, who used to work for a multinational food company, came home to Butuan City in August del Sur in 1999 and started his own banana cacong experiment, supplying five gallons a day to a restaurant.

Although a single pot in his sister's humble kitchen, he took the arduous task of starting the steam. "I had to try the steam for some time and it would strain my arms," he said.

So he did the same best thing. He invented a cacong gadget to rid himself of manual work and improve production time.

Soon, Cane was producing 30 gallons a day and the rate progressed to 150, moving from the kitchen to the backyard. He began to hire assistants, too.

He attributes the growth and expansion through the innovativeness of fabricating his own cooking paraphernalia. "I invented them because I knew it would get to save me a lot of money and make the production process easier."

He was right. Investing an expensive stainless steel cacong machine would only drain his capital.

Being an industrial and mechanical engineer did the trick for him. "It pays if you have this two backgrounds where you get into this kind of business, you get to be creative in the production process," Cane said.

But this production angle was solved, there was marketing and promotion to contend with. People hardly heard of a banana cacong that time and restaurants were hesitant to use them, more so if it was locally made.

"I had to convince them that my cacong was durable, even more better, for daily use," Cane said.

Today the inventor runs Joy Tablecanary Co., which manufactures Joy Banana Cacong. The product is sold throughout Mindanao and some islands in the Visayas.

The company employs 42 regulars and 20 piece-rates. It has its own factory plant in the family-owned lot.

Cane is currently president of the Caraga Regional Association of Traders and Entrepreneurs in Food (Crateef), which was founded in 2005. He has been invited often by the government and private sectors to share his experience.

"My struggle and perseverance are proof that local food entrepreneurs can make it, as long as their heart and mind is into it deeply," Cane says.

Take it from the man who has literally risen from ashes.

THE REAL DEAL Already workers are repairing and cleaning the huge statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary atop the Edsa Shrine as the current edifice and Bridges Avenue in preparation for the 15th observance of the People Power events of Feb. 22-25, 1986, that toppled the Marcos dictatorship and inspired other people to shake the world over to break free of their bondages. ALEXANDER

HK immigration detains ...

From page A1

para kinh kom mahinahon. Ayaw kasing pahuluin."

Asked why he said no one was saying "ayaw nilang ashibin."

The former Press Couple arrived in Hong Kong at 1:40 p.m. on board Cathay Pacific flight CX906. They were eventually allowed to enter Hong Kong at around 4:15 p.m., Vitar Cruz of the Bureau Bulgar said.

Accompanied by the business ex-senator at p.m., Estrada said Hong Kong immigration officers had only valued concerns about his safety because he was not accompanied by a security detail.

"Wala naman di was nothing). They asked for information about my visit here. Wala kasi akong mga bodyguard. They were just worried na wala akong security."

Wedding sponsor

Estrada is to stand as one of the sponsors at the wedding today of the children of businessmen Robert Coptan and Danny Co at the Immaculate Conception Church in Kowloon.

It is his first trip abroad since he was convicted of plunder by the Sandiganbayan last September and pardoned a month later by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Reyno, head of the Philippine consulate's assistance to nationals section, said Hong Kong immigration officers "interviewed" the ex-President.

"They did not elaborate and only said that they were interviewing him," Reyno said, adding that he phoned the immigration officers and told them that Estrada had been pardoned by Macapagal.

"I told them that he is here only for a personal visit and that he should be accorded the proper courtesies as a former head of state," Reyno said. "That is really something you do not want to happen to a former President."

'Why are you here?'

Estrada said he and his wife were taken to a VIP room and interviewed by immigration officers for an hour.

"They asked why I am here, the details of my trip, where I am staying. They also got information from the Philippine [consulate]," Estrada said.

He described the immigration officers as "very courteous."

"They said they only wanted me to be on record," he said.

Reyno said that upon hearing of the delay in the Estrada's admission into Hong Kong, Consul General Alejandrino Vitarsa "personally called up the immigration officers to find out what was happening and to relay our concerns."

He said he knew of no reason why Estrada should be held up at the airport.

"We are not aware of any [blacklist or any reason ... from Congress (Vitarsa) was surprised. He had just returned from a function where he started getting calls about this case."

Reyno also said Estrada's office did not formally request for assistance from the consulate before the former First Couple flew out.

'Heavily guarded' still

Estrada, then still in detention, was last in Hong Kong from Dec. 27, 2000, to Jan. 13, 2001, for knee replacement surgery.

The trip this time is "purely social," and includes a meeting with hundreds of organizations of overseas Filipino workers.

Estrada yesterday at the departurers' lounge of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport in Manila. Estrada told reporters that he felt good at leaving the country because the array of bodyguards assigned to escort him when he was being tried for plunder did.

"This is the first time we took along [having the] I have no security, just heavily guarded scenario," he said with a laugh, elaborating on the repeated digs at his wife.

"I miss this place," Estrada said of the airport. "For the first time as Citizen Erap, I feel very good and elated by the occasion. I want to thank the airport officials for accommodating me."

Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim was there to send his friend off.

No politics

Estrada said (but while in Hong Kong, he would also meet with leaders of OFW groups whom he failed to see during his last trip).

He said the meeting would have no political overtones, and that he would only listen to the OFWs' problems and see what he could do to help them as a private citizen.

"As you know, we should be very much concerned about our OFWs. Without them, perhaps we won't have dollar reserves today," he said.

Estrada said he was satisfied with the government's handling of OFW cases, except those in Jeddah, which, he said, need of immediate government attention.

He was referring to the reported 80 runaway OFWs who had been staying under the Al Shmeisani flyover in Jeddah for over a month now. The Filipinos had reportedly been duped by Raza.

"I think the embassy people should go there and help our people," he said.

Too early

On the political front, Estrada, the ousted impeached leader of the opposition, said it was too early to let the public know whom he would endorse for the 2010 presidential and vice presidential elections.

He said he would disclose his choices only in 2009.

He clarified that he had never invited Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr. the first-ranked leader of the opposition, but added that the latter was welcome to join the camp.

"I respect the Vice President, and if he wants to go to the opposition, he's welcome, [but we have a lot of presidential timber," he said.

Open for comeback film

The former movie actor said he was open to talks about making a comeback film.

If and when, he said he would donate his earnings to charity, just to satisfy or appease the rumor of Ramon Revilla, an organization helping abused children.

"If that happens, OK lang si Al Ai (de los Alas, a popular comedienne) ang kasama ko," Estrada said, chuckling.

The ex-President is expected back in Manila tomorrow. With a report from Lyn Ching, Bulatlat in Manila

Army's 'thinking general' ...

From page A1

tumbo (or "rumor") came from the rear, according to an Inquirer source who did not want to be named since he was not authorized to speak on the matter.

There is a rule in the military that no one may be appointed chief of a major command if he has less than a year to go before the mandated retirement age of 56. Lumia is retiring 21/2 in September.

"The problem is not with Sana but with Lumia," the source said, commenting on reports that Esperon's name was removed because Malacañang had doubts about Sana's loyalty.

Lumia, the chief of the Eastern Mindanao Command, belongs to Class 1975 of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA).

Sana belongs to Class 1976. His classmates, Maj. Gen. Rodrigo Maclang and Maj. Gen. Victor Basilio, are reportedly the two strongest contenders to replace him as army chief.

There are many reasons for the exclusion of Lumia—being Ilonggo and down to just one," the source said.

Lumia is perceived to be a "dove," while Sana and his classmates are seen as "hawks," the source added.

In a command conference in June last year where discussions touched on the unabated extrajudicial killings, a general who spoke to the Inquirer on condition of anonymity talked about the existing standoff between "the hawks and the doves."

The "hawks" purportedly believe in eliminating communist communist front-points and sympathizers, the general said, while the "doves" reportedly maintain that extrajudicial killings would not solve the decades-old insurgency problem.

Also working against Lumia to replace Sana is that he's a Visayan member of the now defunct Philippine Constabulary, according to the source.

"The Philippine Army is very parochial," the source said, adding that only a "pure" Army man should lead the Philippine Army.

Descendant of a Mason here

But Lumia has a claim to history, which the other officials don't have.

Lumia is a descendant of the revolutionary general Antonio Luna and pioneer Ann Luna.

A commandant of the corps of cadets at the PMA some four years ago, Luna initiated the change of the cadets' uniform from the West Point-inspired military cut to the "katipunan," the uniforms worn by the revolutionary forces against Spain.

RISING STAR Then Col. Cardenio Luna, also became commandant of the Philippine Military Academy four years ago and changed the West Point-inspired cadet uniform to one patterned after the katipunan, which was worn by the Filipino revolutionaries against Spain. ALEXANDER

Melo brings ...

From page A1

Service Commission from 1975 to 1979.

Born in Pampanga, Melo took his law degree at the Manuel L. Quezon University in 1956. He finished his master of laws with the highest grade of "meritissimus" at the University of Sto. Tomas in 1965.

Primary goal

He has been deluged with congratulatory calls on his appointment which was made by President Macapagal-Arroyo from Switzerland on Friday.

Melo said he was very happy to read about the President's announcement but clarified that he had yet to receive official appointment papers.

The former justice said he would need time to study the Comelec's problems but, offhand, he said his primary goal in the poll body would be to implement election automation by 2003.

Pursuing this, Melo was expeditious about, particularly with the election watchdog groups who said his credibility and integrity have much hope the tarnished reputation of the poll agency would be restored.

"We will put a new face to the Comelec. It will not be associated with vote-buying and cheating," said Henrietta de Villa, chair of the Parish National Council for Responsible Voting (PCRV).

'Fresh approach'

De Villa said Melo would bring a "fresh approach," particularly to the planned automation of elections.

Melo's nomination was strongly supported by various election reform groups such as the PPCRV, the Volunteers for Clean Elections (VinCE), National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel), and the Institute for Political and Electoral Reforms (IPER).

Father Joaquin Bernas, Chair Chairman Emeritus, also leads WinCE, said Melo got the nod of electoral reform advocates because of his good record in the judiciary.

"He has not been questioned at any time. He is a fair man and he is steadfast in demand as an arbitrator," said Monsod.

He said Melo's performance as chair of the independent commission that probed the killing of militant activists and journalists, known as the Melo Commission, was similarly lauded for making the process transparent and for coming out with a forthright report.

Melo's record in terms of integrity, competence and independence, as well as his reliability as an arbitrator, put him ahead of other potential candidates for the post, Monsod said.

Strong at 71

Despite concerns about his age, both Monsod and De Villa believe that Melo still has the energy for the work ahead.

"He may be 71, but he is a strong 71," said Monsod.

"His political will to institute reforms is a strong factor for him to move beyond expectations," said De Villa.

Comelec Commissioner Rene Sarmiento also welcomed the appointment of Melo, saying that his credentials are built to his years as the Supreme Court's top section in the Melo Commission would be an asset at the Comelec.

Aside from that, he is also politically savvy. He will help train the credibility of the Comelec, Sarmiento said. Civil society groups support his appointment," said Sarmiento.

From Davos, Switzerland, where she made the announcement of the appointment, the President said Melo was the best person to lead the Comelec.

She said she picked Melo to replace Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos Jr., who will retire on Feb. 1, because of his credibility.

"You see how credible he was in his whole report. Everyone, even the UN [United Nations] took all from his report, and when we religiously carried out his recommendations, the unexplained killings went down by 80 percent to one year," she said referring to Melo.

"He's a very, very credible person," Ms Arroyo said.

Sergio Apostol, the President's chief legal counsel, said the President hoped that the appointment of Melo would reassure the public's distrust of the Comelec.

"The appointment of Melo will unify our people. It will wrest down public distrust of the Comelec and this administration," said Apostol in a phone interview.

He said that with his integrity, Melo could restore the credibility of Comelec, and his presence on the poll body would assure the opposition that the administration would not engage "in cheating in election time."

"He should work fast for the implementation of reforms, work honestly and ensure that justice will prevail," said Apostol.

Lacks experience

But the President's election lawyer, Rodolfo Mantiland, however, Melo lacks the experience of running an election body, which is a highly specialized field.

According to Mantiland, "the justice's name is credibility ... but he has the knowledge of it, he has no experience in elections. He has not been an election lawyer. He has not been an expert in election matters."

Opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson said the President's appointment of Melo to the chairmanship of the term of Abalos Vocat Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon showed the Arroyo was being held hostage by the personalities who were reportedly behind her campaign's stained electoral victory in 2004.

"Both acts have one thing in common: Election cheating in 2004," he said.

He said Melo was nominated by Abalos who headed the poll body during the 2004 presidential election.

Esperon was implicated in the so-called "Hello Garci" scandal that raised the specter of alleged cheating during the 2004 elections, but he was cleared by a congressional fact-finding body.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. was hesitating on indifference.

"He's [Melo] an old gent who probably can't learn new tricks, which might be good in that he will not be tempted to play tricks but he may also have apply to a given situation and have to apply them. We'll see," said Pimentel.

Sen. Manuel Roxas II, however, welcomed Melo's appointment even as he opposed Esperon's nomination, saying that Melo's appointment would be the opposite of those who are tainted in fraud.

He described Melo as competent, intelligent and a man of integrity.

"I am very confident that because Melo will uphold the same courage and professionalism [he showed] when he issued the report on extrajudicial killings," Roxas said.

Senate Majority Leader Francisco Tatad also welcomed Melo's appointment.

Honest and competent, but ...

"We wish him well and we hope he will succeed in restoring the much needed faith and trust in the Comelec especially now and reputation has been tarnished by scandal and controversy," he said.

Adel Tamano, spokesperson for the United Opposition, opposed Melo's appointment even as he thought he and the opposition was a close family friend whom he knew to be "honest and competent."

"His personal ties to Gloria Macapagal Arroyo undermines the public's perception of the Comelec as an independent body," said Tamano.

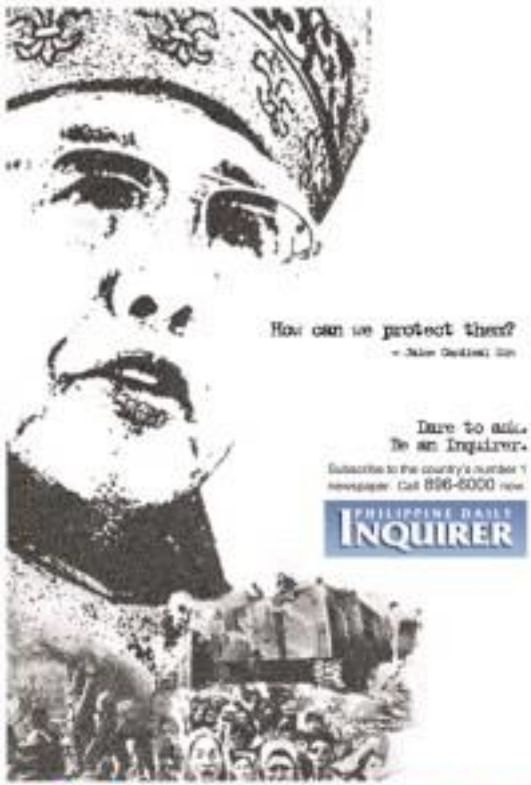
"The actions as Comelec head will always be suspected to be done to favor GMA which, only further destroys whatever is left of the Comelec's credibility," he added.

Overly solicitous of GMA

At the House, party-list Rep. Teodoro Casiño said Melo's performance in the commission probing the killing of militant and civil killings showed that he was "overly solicitous" toward the President.

"[He] arbitrarily and prematurely cleared her of any responsibility in the killings and disappearances, despite the report's from 33 Bayanihan, Alliance of Concerned Teachers, Bulatlat and Dona Pazaflores

4 MIT students here studying 'malunggay'



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(Adrian Ayala Group).

But that's not what Jose Torbay, 26, of Stockholm; David Schlosser, 22, of Wisconsin; Rafi, 26, of Germany, and Jesus Bermudez, 29, of Mexico are here for on the

The MIT Sloan students, who set each for to complete a master's degree in Business Administration in June, are in the Philippines to study the international market outlook on the production of Moringa oil from malunggay seeds as a possible biofuel source.

Since their arrival in the Philippines on Jan. 18, they have been speaking with farmers in Pangasinan, Cotabato, Isabela, Mindoro Oriental and a few other provinces. They are scheduled to return to the United States on Feb. 2.

Business opportunity

The four students' research on Moringa oil as a business opportunity started last September at MIT.

They found a study by scientists in India representing on Moringa oil's properties—that it has unique biofuel characteristics (diesel, indicating fuel stability; a cetane number indicating good ignition behavior, and a cold filter plugging point indicating suitability even in winter).

According to Salomon, the group's spokesperson, the Philippines has distinct advantages over other countries for the mass production of Moringa oil.

He cited its geographical proximity to large markets (such as Japan, Korea, India, China and the US West Coast), the availability of labor, and large tracts of idle farmland (6 million hectares, per the Department of Agriculture).

And unlike jatropha—another plant being developed for biofuel production—Moringa will not produce toxic byproducts, Salomon said.

He said its residue could even be used to feed livestock, or help in fighting industrialization.

At present, the Philippines does not have substantial malunggay plantations, Salomon observed. "But we hope that as this (investment) changes, the world will come to know the Philippines in this regard," he said.

Global Entrepreneurship Lab

The students have presented their study to Cha Bayan mont of Agriculture (DA).

The four are now in charge of their semester through a Jan. 17 e-mail from the Reddy Sloan Service, a De-funded advocacy group for biotechnology.

MIT Sloan confirmed that indeed, there were MBA students in the Philippines completing their Global Entrepreneurship Laboratory (G-lab) requirements.

G-Lab is a course that enables teams of management, engineering and science students at MIT to work closely with the top management of international startup companies in solving real-world problems.

G-Lab is helping students "find the belief that the United States is the center of the world economy," MIT Prof. Richard Locke said in a statement. "They learn through hands-on experience that business models need to be re-adapted from the classroom into the actual country and culture of the company site."

"In the end, most students are informed by their experience, to the extent that it may directly influence the direction of their careers," Locke said.

After completing their studies in the Philippines and acquiring their MBA degrees at MIT Sloan, Bermudez will take a job as Cemex as a manager, Rafi and Torbay will become associate consultants at McKinsey & Co. in California, and Salomon will be a product manager at Microsoft.

Lookup

As it turned out, Salomon and his colleagues were linked up with the Filipino biotech company Soccsksargen International Group—which reportedly pioneered the extraction of pure oil from malunggay seeds.

The subsidiary of Socsksargen runs Moringa oil for use as biofuel is being tested in the United States. The results will be known within weeks, Salomon said.

He said the first large Moringa plantation in the Philippines would most likely be set up in Calbayog, Western Samar, as a result of a Jan. 22 casual meeting of representatives between engineer Danilo Bhattacharya, Socsksargen president and CEO, and Calbayog Mayor Mel Senen S. Sarmiento.

Moringa oil the MIT Sloan students were brainstormed by the engineers of Filipino farmers to invest in the malunggay business.

"They [students] were really fascinated by the scenery we passed on our trips, and were moved by the overwhelming acceptance of this project," he told the Inquirer.

14 varieties

In a e-mail, the four students said 14 varieties of anti-maggay had spread around the world. Cross from original habitat in the Himalayas.

But Moringa oil is not suitably available anywhere at this time, Salomon said.

And while malunggay plantations can be found in India and some African countries, there are as yet no large-scale plans for extracting the oil because the leaves and green pods are eaten there, he said.

THE LOWLY MALUNGGAY (scientific name: Moringa oleifera) known as the world's most nutritious plant could also be a source of clean energy

The students told the Philippines was the only country they knew of with "large-scale plans" of producing Moringa oil from malunggay seeds.

They also said orchards would not be suitable for malunggay plantations. "as Moringa would not interfere with the food chain from this point of view."

The students estimated a potential overseas demand for Moringa oil reaching "several billion liters per year over the next few years, depending on other industry we are looking at."

Salomon said his group based this estimate on industry research as well as conversations with potential clients.

[No copy of the group's study was provided. Patricia Reverse of MIT Glass's Office of Media Relations said the final paper with recommendations might take longer to put together.]

Crime against humanity?

The prospect of developing billions of liters of biofuel for the world's consumption has not always been viewed favorably or optimistically.

Jean Ziegler, the United Nations' special rapporteur on the right to food, said biofuel could have a catastrophic impact on world hunger.

He called the conversion of food crops into biofuel "a crime against humanity," saying it would lead to food shortages and price jumps that would push millions of hungry people to starvation.

But according to Salomon, removing oil from malunggay seeds for the world market is a project that strongly aligns national, social and business interests.

And this makes the project all the more fulfilling for them. "To run farmer convers, we will remember this as an example where public and private sector interests can coincide and work together."

Revenues

For the Reddy Sloan Service report, the MIT Sloan students said that with a 10-liter malunggay farm, a farmer could earn P2 million during the first years. P3 million in the next three years, and P4 million in the next four years. In addition, the meal, or cake, of malunggay seeds may be used as livestock feed.

[The revenue computations were based on the business proposal offered by Inocan and the estimated yields of malunggay seeds per hectare of land.]

Compared with, a farmer could earn P1,440,000 a year planting corn, or P814,000 a year planting coconuts.

In the oil extraction plants that will be set up alongside the malunggay plantations, the labor force per manufacturing plant is estimated at 100 employees. By 2040, around 2,000 jobs and resources would be employed in an estimated 50 manufacturing sites.

But here's a whopper: The students said an extraction facility that would pass European and US standards would cost at least P250 million.

Very nutritious

Salomon recalled how malunggay's nutritive properties began to be known in 1999, when it was used in Africa to fight malnutrition.

He said its nutritive properties, such as beta carotene, and the presence of antioxidants such as alpha-tocopherol made it suitable for the production of high-end health products.

He added that malunggay could also be used as an active ingredient in beauty products such as emollients.

CEOs . . .

From page A1

"That's what we've been saying all along. The Philippine economy has turned around. (A question of growth rebalancing countries cannot really long defeat," the President told reporters here.

"About seven percent growth in 2007, probably the highest in Southeast Asia, the stock market is up despite the global uncertainty this week. Investment has jobs created in seven years. One of the strongest currencies in Asia, investments surging. Many companies are calling over facilities with us," she said, extolling off the achievements in the economy.

The President said the government is targeting a 6.5-per cent growth rate for 2008.

Performing above target

"Actually our growth target for 2008 is only about 6.5 percent. We're performing above target, so I'd rather not commit it so well over-performs," she said.

Since arriving in Switzerland late Tuesday, Ms Arroyo has held one-on-one meetings with a number of CEOs from some of the world's largest companies on the sidelines of the Davos forum.

Wall Pikadon of Citibank says that we are in the best position today than ever to sell bond, to be confident in the face of such [political uncertainty," the President later told reporters.

She says that Philippine companies are closely watched by Moody's, Bell, their unit CEO of Cost-Cole, as well as the CEOs of HSBC and Credit Suisse, among other business leaders she met with in Davos.

"It's something that all the leaders that dealt with us have said during this forum summit," she said.

Strong position

"But as I said, nonetheless, we shouldn't be complacent. What is being said is positive. But we're in a strong position now but we can be resilient. We just have to play our cards right," Ms Arroyo said.

Bholler has advised the Philippines to be cautious about price stability and create incentives, among other things, in the next budget.

After her series of meetings with the chief executives, the President said she managed to get at least three investment commitments, but declined to give details.

"I had three very good prospects that are quite concrete but I can't inform about them now," she said, adding that she preferred that the companies would be the ones to announce it.

She said she had been making the Philippines as a "favorable investment destination" in her speeches and meetings.

In her talk before the Swiss-Asian Chamber of Commerce in Davos, Ms Arroyo boasted of the Philippines' economic turnaround, and declared that with its strong fundamentals, the economy would weather the looming global financial crisis.

Duke of York

On her last day in Davos, the President met with Prince Andrew, the Duke of York, and discussed possible British investments in Mindanao.

The Prince serves as Britain's Special Representative for International Trade and Investment.

"We exchanged notes about international issues, and we discussed ways to increase the investments in the Philippines, and some business firms interested in doing business in the Philippines."

She said the UK had many instruments in the country.

Ms Arroyo said her delegation flew Saturday morning to Dubai for a visit with investors. Filipinos there, as well as to discuss investment prospects with the emirate's business leaders.

The President capped her busy three-day visit to Switzerland with a private dinner on Friday with CEOs from Dubai at the Hotel Hotel in Davos.

Next destination

Dubai is the second largest destination for overseas Filipino workers after Saudi Arabia.

The President said she decided to visit Dubai upon the request of the members of the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) who asked her to "piggyback their investment road shows" abroad, including Dubai.

"Because Dubai is a financial capital, several of the businessmen wanted the Gulf she made appointments to see me. So I am going to have like an extension of Davos there," she said.

Tomorrow, the President is set to hold a roundtable discussion with Union Bank of Switzerland (UBS) investors, speak before members of the Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and meet with Prince Talal bin Abdulaziz and Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al-Maktoum.

She is expected to launch a lodging facility for OFWs whose remittances are being collected by the strong peso.

Moody's upgrade

In Malacañang, Cabinet Secretary Ricardo Saludo said "the world was thinking the Philippines on, with the Moody's upgrade," and positive spillovers from the World Economic Forum in Switzerland."

He said the Moody's ratings upgrade showed that the Davos [result] and the subject "countries are [stable] and members of the economy [won't] pump off."

"The way forward is clear: Accelerate development and propoor projects, and maintain the fiscal strength and social mobility needed to attract job-creating investments," said Saludo.

Lifting VAT on oil

But he again rejected Duke calling[for suspension of the lifting of the value-added tax (VAT) on oil as it would only hurt investor confidence and hamper stability.

Saludo said the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, Moody's and other top analysts' agencies also.

He said even Senate Budget Secretary Benjamin Diokno, a frequent critic of the government, has said that lifting the oil VAT would "send wrong signals to [the] consumers" [so] need to conserve energy" and [consumers] no more fiscal discipline."

Benefit only for well-off

Moreover, lifting the VAT would cut P64 billion in direct revenue spending by the government and "benefit mainly well-off households and businesses," Saludo said.

He explained that only nine percent of the imported oil and diesel are consumed by families earning P5,000 per month or less.

"It's the same story for power. Even [owners have won't be helped much, since the oil VAT comprises only 24 centavos of the P7.50 subsidy. Instead, we should not cut tens of billions of pesos from pro-poor programs just to give discounts mainly to well-to-do families and firms that may not cut prices even if the VAT is lifted," Saludo said.

With reports from Michael Lim Ubac and Aurora Araug

GMA selling cheap: RP labor

A MILITANT OVERSEAS Filipino group based in the United Kingdom (UK) yesterday criticized President Macapagal-Arroyo's efforts to promote Filipino workers in Dubai, saying her administration is treating "another export item, in addition to Filipino labor: foreigners."

In a statement, Migrante-UAE chair Eyrine Pagsisihan said GMA's mission would be to do business with the President's trade delegation "because you are still using labor for overseas Filipinos are commodities undergoing."

The group dismissed the planned bridge fund for OFWs, saying: "What guarantees will this OFW bridge fund provide us that it will deliver the return that OFWs aren't died from much money will fund campaigns rather than our OFWs money investments?"

Pagsisihan said the President was really here overlooking OFWs, she should press for the UAE government to sign ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of Their families.

The Philippines is a signatory to the convention since 1995 but only four countries have ratified it. It takes effect only when 20 countries sign it.

FOCUS ON ASEAN President Arroyo is set to speak at the "Emerging Asian Community: The Role of the Region" at the World Economic Forum. President Arroyo is a strongly worded message calls for political reform in the region. AP

GMA rallies Asean leaders: Let's work to free Suu Kyi, and now

By TJ Burgonio

DAVOS, SWITZERLAND (VOA/DJIA)—President Macapagal-Arroyo on Friday urged the leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) to make a difference in the region by working to bring about the release of the jailed Burmese opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi.

"We must work together to make the tough choices to make Asean real and Aung San Suu Kyi free," the President said in a strongly worded message she delivered at the Davos session of the World Economic Forum here.

The President said the regional grouping would mean a "level of indecisiveness" on the issue of human rights "if we are to work collaboratively for the common good."

"We must set political reform. We must see Aung San Suu Kyi released and now," she told Asean leaders and dignitaries during the high-level session called "The Emerging Asian Community: Role of Society."

She warned that the Philippines could not ride the Asean Charter train to legislate into law "real political reforms" into place in Burma (Myanmar).

The charter signed during the November 2007 Asean Leaders Summit in Singapore seeks to create a human rights body in the region.

Policy of noninterference

Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, however, stressed that the 10-member Asean must always abide by its policy of "noninterference."

"It's important to respect [the principle of noninterference in the internal affairs of member countries. [That's why there's] a problem on how to deal with the Myanmar issue," he said.

Also present at the session were Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, Asean Secretary General Ong Keng Yong, officials from other Asean member countries, and Stephen Green, chair of HSBC Holdings.

Suu Kyi, the Nobel Peace laureate, has been held under house arrest in Burma's ruling military junta since 2002.

Same, strong message

The junta, which took power in 1988, called elections in 1990, but refused to recognize the results when Suu Kyi's party won a resounding victory.

President Arroyo delivered the same message when she addressed the Gender Policy Group moments later.

"What should we do? We stand up and call for Aung San Suu Kyi's freedom," she said.

Ms Arroyo has consistently advocated that Burma take a more active role in controlling refugee in Burma. At the 12th Asean summit last November, she called on her fellow Asean leaders to work for the release of Suu Kyi.

FRENCH MEETING FOR WIFE President Arroyo exchanges pleasantries with Janet Aagaard Zahid de Ryals during the Asean session of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. PRESIDENTIAL PHOTO

Education project seeks to turn best, . . .

From page A1

permanent of Education to uplift the image of the teaching profession. Among the young, and improve the quality of public schools in Cebu.

The goal, according to PBSP's dean, Ramon del Rosario Jr., is to bring back pride among teachers. By games famous educator Jaspers Stadium rule said. "Teaching is not a lost art, but the regard for it is [not] evident."

Del Rosario said he hopes the program will make more people say "my dear Aunt Sally was a teacher, no sir-ee" and do away with the "those long Quiet a teacher]" notion [most prevalent today].

Sponsoring the best

At today's launch of the program at the Ritz Carlton in Makati City, the PBSP and the 3,000 Teacher Program would sponsor the schooling of some of the best graduating high school students through a full scholarship grant with stipends.

Some 20 universities, including Philippine Normal University and De La Salle University-Manila, have signed to partner with PBSP for the project, which will begin next academic year. Ms are expected to join.

Successful applicants, who will be required to take up Education and major in English, Math or Science, will receive a monthly allowance of P2,000 for 10 months of each school year, and a book allowance of P2,000 per semester.

Scholarship guidelines

"In return, they are expected to go back to their home provinces to teach in a public school for at least five years before considering other options," said PBSP's executive director Debra Sabido.

Based on the scholarship guidelines, students will not be allowed to shift courses and will be required to enrollment all afternoon to pass should they choose to drop out or change majors.

They will be required to stay in the country and serve in the public school system for five years after passing the Licensure Exam for Teachers, according to the rules.

"Students who choose to leave the country will be required to refund the program costs," Salazar said.

He explained that just as schools would support the tuition of the scholars, schools participating in the program should also [sponsor], among other financial needs, amounting to P25,000 per year for four years for each scholarship slot.

Commitment

"We already have 100 slots opened out to all but three regions," Sabido said.

The Philippine Daily Inquirer is one of the initial 13 partner companies, including four other media organizations that have pledged their commitment to sponsoring scholarships.

PSBP officials said 1,000 Teachers hopes to "restore the place of our teachers as nation-building" by countering the "those long" mentality as prevalent today.

A PSBP statement which appeared in a recent edition of the Quality Teacher magazine of Ibon Databank Foundation said, "In reality teachers are not just teachers. They are classroom managers."

CEOs of classroom

It added: "They are chief operating officers of cramped classrooms with some of the most lively and academically challenged students. They manage class discipline, maximize the school resources, act as counselors to students, and, as if all these were not enough, they take home a mountain of paper work at the end of the day."

"And to top that, teachers are social pioneers, they are confidantes, they are mentors, they are friends," the statement said.

Education Secretary Jesli Lapus, who attended the launch, said the "those long" mentality reminded him of the old government campaign that sought to change people's negative attitude toward contract jobs like being a [clerk].

In the past, teachers enjoyed high regard among members of the community, he said. "Teachers were role models."

But because of low wages, the teaching profession does not attract as much talent as it used to, Lapus said, citing the only low percentage of male teachers compared to female teachers.

Revitalize teaching

"That's because [not] are usually the breadwinners and they're forced to take jobs, like going abroad where they can receive higher salary," Lapus said.

"Pension, on the other hand, often decide to become teachers because many [even through the salary is not high, it is stable," Salazar said. He added that a public schoolteacher's initial pay of about P11,000 was not too bad compared with other jobs.

Lapus said he hopes projects like 1,000 Teachers would help counteract the reluctance to [enter, which remains in new need of more funds for teachers, classrooms, and textbooks.

"We hope this is [just] an initial response of the business community because we extremely need more scholarships," said Senate financial leader participant Jose Cuisia, who chairs the PBSP Teachers Quality Working Group.

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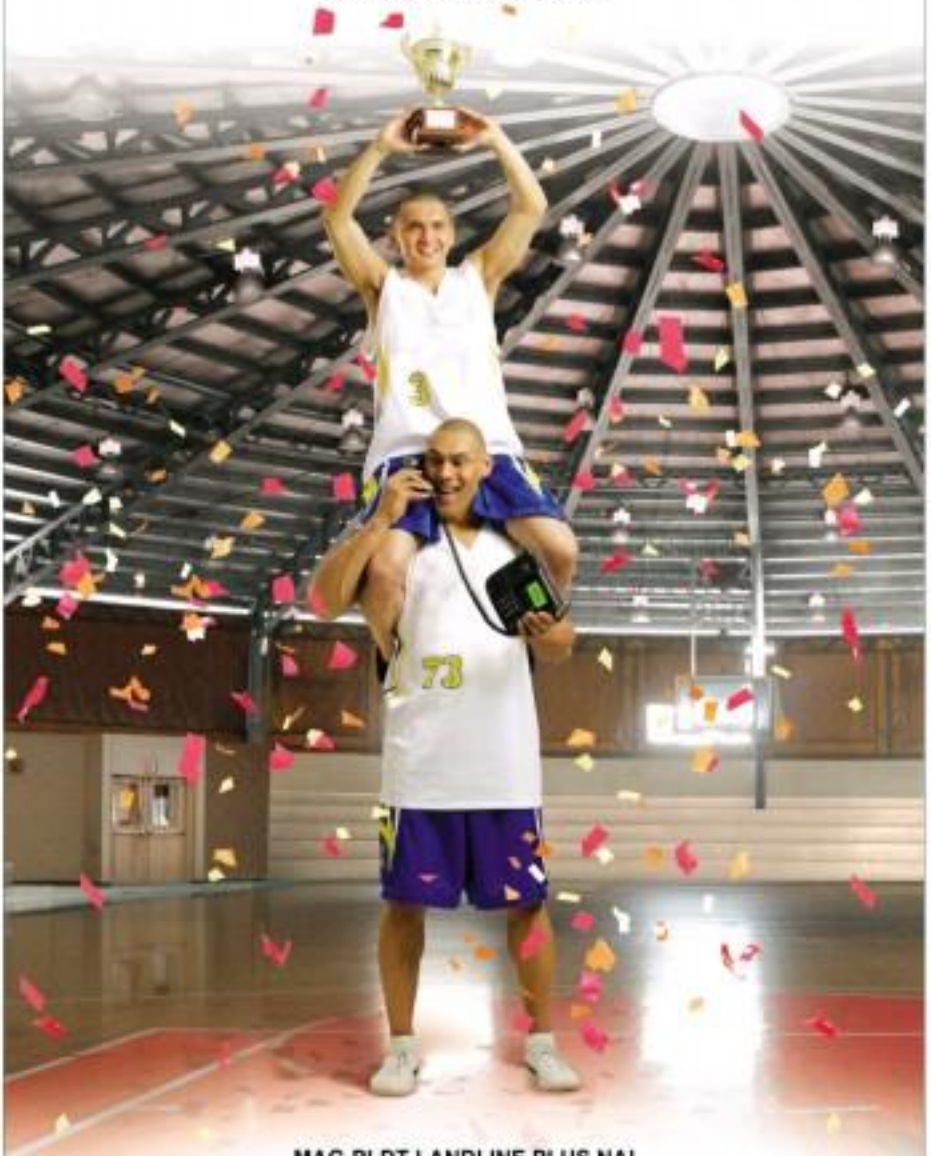

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HOME-IN-A-BOX

Capsule beds are main feature in new Gwapotel

By DJ Yap

WHAT a capsule bed in a Japanese hotel looks like that was the inside. This one is equipped with a TV set.

CLAUSTROPHOBICS WILL NOT like the idea, but most out-of-towners will find the latest innovation of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority's home away from home—as a bus.

For only P20, laborers, vendors and even white collar workers in need of a place to stay the night in Tondo can soon have their own private sleeping space with all the comforts of a necessary but enclosed an airplane.

But unlike the five Gwapotel bus on Bonifacio Drive in Port Area, Manila, which has double deck beds, the second facility will feature "capsular beds," inspired by Japan's capsule hotels, a type of cheap accommodation unique to that country.

"Of course, Gwapotel will be a cheaper version," architect Alfonso Fernando, head of the MMDA Construction Equipment and Maintenance Office, said.

The MMDA began to complete construction and renovation of the lot located in the heart of Tondo's residential and commercial zone on Jose Abad Santos Street by May.

The design, said artist Jojo Pinga, is based on Tokyo's capsule hotels where guests stay in a small sleeping space that comes complete with amenities like a reading light, a TV set, and so on.

It was MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando who thought of introducing the novel type of accommodation to the Philippines after seeing an example of the capsule hotel on a recent trip to Japan, Pinga said.

"Consider private space for Gwapotel guests" was how Romero described the idea of building capsular beds instead of the usual double deck beds in the inn.

Another way to put it, as an MMDA press release said, was to compare the hotel service to the on-board amenities of an overseas air-con plane.

Priced at just P20 for overnight lodging (add P5 for a shower), guests may sleep in an air-conditioned room with three-deck capsular beds equipped with good lumbar support, Romero said.

Travelers who check in at Gwapotel can "just doze off, simply relax or read newspapers and magazines in their capsular beds," he added.

According to Romero, the beds will be equipped with a tubular control panel for individual spotlight for reading, as well as for the air-conditioner or thermostat adjustments.

"There's piped in music, too, he added.

As of this writing, a fiberglass model of the capsular bed was still under construction, with Fernando making several adjustments and changes along the way, Pinga said.

"Chairman Fernando wanted to change almost 80 percent of the design, as we need to work on it for a few more days," he told the layouts. He said he expected the prototype to be finished soon.

The early Pinga expects overseas bonded their way "Gwapotel people will probably describe them as refrigerated coffins," he said.

But he takes this in stride, saying the MMDA would do its best to ensure that the beds would be conducive to a good night's sleep.

Construction and renovation work for the second Gwapotel bus started in the abandoned 2,400-sq m Emmanuel Hospital on Jose Abad Santos Street, Romero said.

Although Tondo is not known for peaceful neighborhoods, Romero said the site, a mix of residential households and commercial establishments, hosts a peaceful community.

But to ensure the safety of guests in the inn, roving security guards will be posted on every floor of the building, he said.

Renovation for the hospital building alone is expected to cost P16.7 million, he added.

Emmanuel Hospital, through the Privatization Management Office of the Department of Finance, has agreed to rent out the old building to the MMDA for P200,000 a month, Romero said.

For this purpose, a memorandum of understanding was signed recently by both parties.

The hospital has two separate structures—the main hospital building and an annex which used to house the nurses and nurse quarters.

Normally, the main building can accommodate 240 people while the annex can accommodate 245 more.

But with capsular beds in place instead of the usual double deck beds, the Gwapotel inn can accommodate 800 people "at any given time," Romero said.

Just like in the original Gwapotel, separate areas will be separated from the men, he said.

MMDA General Manager Robert Nazareno said the decision to place the new Gwapotel in Tondo was based on the availability and accessibility of the building, as well as the number of people it can serve.

Fernando said the inn could help ease traffic in the densely populated district since travelers in the area's warehouses and industrial firms could opt to stay the night in Gwapotel instead of going home.

JAPAN has many capsule hotels for visitors looking for affordable lodging. There is a common bathroom at the end of the bedroom-cum-pull-down for privacy.

FOR ONLY P20 a night, people who want nothing more than a bed to sleep in can stay at the soon-to-be-built Gwapotel in Tondo.

MMDA CHAIR Bayani Fernando thought about putting capsular beds in the new Gwapotel after he visited a capsule hotel in Japan during a recent trip.

Sharing the gift of health with the Baseco community

By Maria Calderon
Contributor

ONCE A THOUSAND HOMES now stand in rows of colorful low-rise housing units in this organized community of Baseco Bagong Pag-asa in Tondo, Manila, where once homeless families now enjoy a life of potential convenience.

Habitat for Humanity, the non-profit international and ecumenical housing organization that made this possible by providing simple but decent and affordable housing in partnership with people in need, has done a good job.

Through Habitat's values formation workshops, it is able to instill pride of place and the importance of hard work in their home partners, rewarding them with their own titled piece of property they can call home.

Now that these families have found a roof over their heads, the basic and crucial need of their children has become the total concern.

Only recently, the Filipino-owned pharmaceutical company, Pascual Laboratories, launched the "Health for Humanity" program in partnership with Habitat to improve family health.

Mia Pascual, granddaughter of the company's founders, designed the program with four elements:

- building regular medical missions to address family concerns' health and hygiene needs;
- training residents in the community in the propagation of herbal plants which can become their source of livelihood;
- setting up a Baseco Bagong Buhay Cooperative where residents can have access to affordable drugs from Pascual Lab;
- introducing a special Gift of Health package sold at 45 percent drug stores.

The packages come in two types: The first costs P100 and contains Lagundi tablets and syrup, Bioflu (a Oral Multivitamin Salts for dehydration), Betadine skin cleanser, vitamins and multivitamins for children, among others.

The second package costs P950 and contains a variety of medicine like Celecoxib 200mg, Biogesic Cough Syrup and tablets and Pharex 10 Complex.

The company is inviting individuals and companies who want to support Habitat for Humanity projects to enroll of specially priced packages which they can give away to friends or to families in housing projects such as the one in Baseco.

With the rising cost of medicine, health care doesn't necessarily have to come in prices as packages with only the rich able to afford a healthy lifestyle.

World Pool Championship, bakit hindi?

– Efren "Bata" Reyes

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SUNDAY, JANUARY 27, 2008

"MY ASPIRATION for [OFWs deployed when we] moved 'Dubai' in the Middle East, [that OFWs played a] key role in the move. We worked, talked with them. It made me realize that they also find no place to open dollars for their families."

RIZA MANGAOIL, January 2008

GLOBAL Pinoy

Editor Gerry Lirio

So, you want to be a nurse in the US

41-page study identifies 25 problems reported by foreign nurses, Filipinos

By Christian V. Esguerra

SAN FRANCISCO—A FILIPINO nurse quit his job and sold all of his belongings, all for the promise of a lucrative job at an American hospital. Little did he know that the recruiter wouldn't show up and that he would run away with his money.

He would settle for another job in Saudi Arabia, a far cry from his American dream.

A fellow nurse had better luck and was even promoted supervisor in another hospital. But his salary was much lower than that received by American nurses under him, a difference of almost $10 in a workplace where every penny counts.

Several other Pinoy nurses listed online as registered nurses were treated as second-class citizens.

"They assume that Filipinos don't have lives," one of them complained, citing instances when they would be pinched out of precious "off" days for another round of hand labor. To think that they were actually paid less than other agency nurses.

So, the joke still went to be a nurse in the United States?

Groundbreaking report

These sad stories and more of the same are revealed in a groundbreaking report by a US-based policy research group on the "burgeoning"—but largely unchecked—American nursing industry.

The study by Academyhealth zeroes in on unethical practices of recruitment of foreign-educated nurses (FENs), particularly Filipinos.

The 41-page report released last November identified at least 25 problems reported by FENs interviewed for the study. Many of these abuses alleged by some of the hands of "staffing" agencies that unlawfully withhold wages, charging at a much lower salary besides substandard living conditions.

Many of the nurses interviewed for the study were Filipinos, who, according to a 2007 survey of the American Hospitals Association, were working in 40 percent of U.S. hospitals hiring FENs.

Former Health Secretary Jaime Galvez Tan, who furnished the Inquirer a copy of the study, said the report was a crucial first step in addressing unethical recruitment practices in the US.

He said all eyes were on the Philippines because it was the biggest supplier of nurses worldwide. Academyhealth said it "remains the most important source country for the United States," which, according to its study, would have a demand for around 800,000 nurses by 2018.

IRP is test case

"The US is finally taking notice," Galvez Tan told the Inquirer in an interview, referring to the unethical recruitment of FENs. "The Philippines is a test case. What happens to us can also happen to other countries because we are the largest exporter of nurses."

Galvez Tan, who is advocating a "win-win" solution to the nursing migration phenomenon, was the lone FQ guest in the Academyhealth meeting in Washington more than a month ago.

The group is a "professional society" of around 4,000 "public policymakers, business decision makers, health services researchers, policy analysts, economists, sociologists, political scientists, consultants, clinicians, and students."

The Academyhealth study is the initial report in a two-year project titled "International Recruitment of Nurses to the United States: Toward a Consensus on Ethical Standards of Practice." The project seeks to identify ways to "reduce the harm and increase the benefits of international nurse recruitment for source countries and for migrant nurses themselves."

Despite the growing importance of the international nurse recruitment industry, no governmental or nongovernmental organization monitors the industry's size, scope, and operations," it said.

Two main issues

Academyhealth raised two main issues—how FENs can be recruited "in a way that does not disrupt the delivery of vital health services to local populations of source countries, especially those countries with poor health systems and high burdens of disease" and how the rights of FENs can be "guaranteed throughout the processes of recruitment and immigration into the US."

The Philippines figured prominently in the study because of the huge FQ gains taken from in the American health service workers. Galvez Tan estimated that 10,000 to 15,000 Filipino nurses were leaving the Philippines for greener pastures elsewhere every year.

Academyhealth cited the Philippines as among the countries whose governments were "actively facilitating the departure of nurses."

'Staffing'

"At least among small countries, the sustainability of the 'nurse for export' scenario is currently being tested in the Philippines," it said in the study. "The government has historically supported the export of nurses, and the private sector has also demonstrated an ability to produce more nurses than the Philippines."

The results of the Academyhealth study were hardly encouraging.

Concerns were raised over the presence of recruitment by "staffing" agencies, whose practice nurse was unlike security or janitorial services in the Philippines. On top of recruiting FENs, a number of them subsequently become employers of nurses. As a result, their nurse-employees get less than what they were supposed to have when working directly for hospitals.

"Staffing" is one of three recruitment models for foreign health care professionals in the US. The others are "direct" recruitment wherein hospitals transact directly with applicants, and "placement" wherein FENs are "placed" in health care organizations by recruitment agencies.

"Many FENs working for staffing agencies reported that they are paid so much (as $15) less per hour, or almost 25 percent less, than direct-hire nurses and, in some cases, FENs from other agencies who work in the same facility," the study said.

Questionable practice

Academyhealth noted that most of the nurses interviewed in the study earned somewhere between $20 and $30 per hour compared to directly hired FENs occupying the same position whose salary rate was between $30 and $35 per hour.

The study cited a Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS) survey showing that "18 percent of recruiters charge nurses a fee for their services, a questionable practice considering that such recruiters also receive payment from employers."

Galvez Tan said recruiters invested as much as $30,000 from some US hospitals for every nurse they recruited. "It's really exorbitant," he lamented. "Recruits should not be made to pay."

He also deplored the practice of American states holding the highest amount just so recruitment agencies could supply their demand for nurses as soon as possible. A list of say, $30,000 for each recruit, apparently is not unwise considering that hospitals reportedly spend $92,442 to replace a nurse.

Of 1,24 recruiters arbitrarily asked by the Academyhealth researchers in August 2007, 64 percent were "active" in the Philippines, the highest rate among nine regions reporting nurses. India was second at 16 percent.

One recruiter told the group that about 25 percent of agencies in the US were "using the staffing model." A separate CGFNS survey said 45 percent were into the scheme.

In all, Academyhealth listed at least 25 problems mentioned by FENs included in the study.

Selling of contracts

One complaint was that nursing applicants were duped into accepting under-staffing agencies—or during a job currently delivered from the one stipulated in the contract. One nurse reportedly testified as a nanny for an agency owner.

Contracts were all but sacred, many FENs complained. "Some nurses sign contracts to work with a particular employer and, upon arrival, learn that they must work for another employer."

Others cited the "selling" of contracts to another agency, forcing recruits to work for the new company's hospital or nursing home.

Academyhealth reported that nurses wanting to get out of the bind could either pay a "breach" fee ranging from $8,000 to $50,000 or be sued for contract breach.

"The original recruiter may use much-vaunted 'social contacts' and 'nurse personnel' for family hard deals put up as collateral," it said.

Prevailing sentiment

In the Academyhealth meeting in Shenandoah, Galvez Tan said the prevailing sentiment among participants was to encourage "self-regulation" among recruitment agencies. But he argued that a one-track approach would never solve the problem of unethical recruitment practices.

"I'd like to see the day when the US government will have a bilateral national policy against unethical recruitment," he said.

Esguerra is an Inquirer reporter on a study grant at the University of San Francisco in California.

JAIME GALVEZ TAN: The US is finally taking notice of the unethical practices of recruiting non-American nurses, including Filipinos.

ALL for that elusive American dream. Filipino nurses, even doctors like medical board topnotcher-turned nurse Elmer Jacinto, leave their homes, only to find to their discomfiture that the grass outside is sometimes even browner, if not parched and drier.

OFW convenience to the max of a one-stop shop in Cavite

By Kenneth M. del Rosario

LAURENCE RUEDAS, a SON OF AN OFW, while shopping for gifts during the holidays last month, needed to convert the dollar allowance he received from his mom to pesos. Lucky for him, a money changer was sitting right smack at the center of the mall where he was in.

After getting his pesos, the 25-year-old call center agent, whose mother is a general manager of an ice cream parlor in Hawaii, was surprised to find out he need not go anywhere else to surf the Internet or pay his phone bills. That's because he was inside an OFW Pamilya Center.

Located in Robinson's Mall (formerly Dasi in Cavite, the OFW Pamilya Center, which features a remittance company, a money changer an Internet shop, and a telecommunications conduit, is one of the primary services OFWs and their families avail regularly—are also found in a zone that houses recruitment and travel agencies, personnel institutions, real estate enterprises, and a courier service, among others.

"It was really convenient for me," Laurence said, referring to his experiences in the center. "The last time everything that I needed was in one place inside a mall makes for a very interactive, exciting affair."

Two months after its opening last November, the OFW Pamilya Center in Dasmariñas, the second center just up by the mall giant—the first was inaugurated in its Imus branch a month earlier—had serviced virtually all the needs of thousands of overseas workers and their families.

Support system

"We wanted to create a one-stop service that would provide a support system for our kababayans abroad and their immediate and extended families in the country," said Noe Ann C. Villegas, Robinsons Land's corporate public relations manager.

Laurence, who visits the Dasmariñas mall only five times a year, said he just might frequent the place more often from now on. "Now, there's an added reason for me and my family to go there. Ideal! I need to find time one place to go to and not to get the service I need because they're all available in the center. I appreciate the fact that they built something like this for OFWs," he said.

Because of its 300-square meter size, the OFW Pamilya Center easily transforms into a meeting place for workshops and seminars on livelihood programs, microfinance, and entrepreneurship—aimed at promoting wealth management to people like Laurence, so they can take the dollar remittances they receive from their loved ones abroad towards a more productive direction.

The center also becomes an ideal place to visit for OFWs who want to return to property because real estate companies, with special packages specifically for OFW families, often set their product launches there, Rose Ann said.

But the OFW Pamilya Center is not just all business. The center is also a place where OFWs and their families can relax, bond, and spend quality time together.

Said Laurence: "I was in the center for an hour and already I was able to meet a girl whom dad is an engineer in the Middle East." The spacious place is indeed easy and friendly enough to be conducive for socializing as well, he added.

Located at the ground floor of the mall, the center provides accessibility not just to OFWs and their families but to all mall goers alike.

Aside from engineers in the Middle East, Rose Ann said nurses, doctors, teachers, and other contract workers from the US, Australia, Italy, Spain, and the United Kingdom, among others, had frequented the center.

"With a dedicated area for chatting and eating, people really stay for a long time when they come to the place. And we're happy about that because we want the center to be their second home," she said.

That homey feeling

It seems be the presence of partner-government institutions that adds to the "homey" feel of the center which caters to up to 200 people a day.

The Overseas Workers Welfare Administration, Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, and the Bureau of Immigration, along with the National Bureau of Investigation, the Social Security System, and the Government Service Insurance System, all helping to ease efficient document processing, loan applications, and even valid counseling.

IN A bright corner at a Dasmariñas mall is where hard-earned dollars are changed for a few pesos more, where OFW kids re-connect with their folks and catch up with their lives.

But in the end, it's here in the country where they want OFWs to stay after earning their keep abroad, Rose Ann stressed. "We want them to come home and invest, or come back to their roots. That's why we're setting up seminars to teach them how to use their money well. We don't want them to be back abroad."

Laurence is planning to go back to the center, where a listing of job offerings abroad is available. "I'm not closing doors," he said, when asked whether he plans to work abroad like his mom as well. "But should I decide to work overseas, I'd feel more comfortable knowing there's a place like the center for me, my friends, and family."

The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Guico

Iraq launches 'final' battle vs al-Qaida

More soldiers, police sent to Iraqi rebels' last major stronghold

BAGHDAD—IRAQI SECURITY FORCES HAVE BEGUN A "decisive" final offensive against al-Qaida in Iraq to push the Sunni Islamist militants out of their last major stronghold in the north, Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki said on Friday.

He said Iraqi soldiers and police were being sent to Mosul, where a massive blast blamed on al-Qaida killed 40 people and wounded 220 on Wednesday, and an operation room had been set up in the city, 390 kilometers north of Baghdad.

US military commanders say al-Qaeda, blamed for most big bombings in Iraq, has regrouped in the northern provinces after being squeezed out of western Anbar province and from around Baghdad during security crackdowns last year.

They describe Mosul, capital of Nineveh province, as al-Qaeda's last major urban stronghold in Iraq.

"We have set up an operations room in Nineveh to complete the final battle with Al-Qaida along with the officials and members of the previous regime," Maliki said, referring to other Sunni militants the Shiite-led government says remain loyal to former leader Saddam Hussein.

"Today our forces started moving to Mosul. What we are planning in Nineveh will be decisive," he said during a ceremony for victims of violence in the holy Shiite city of Karbala in southern Iraq, broadcast on state television.

Maliki gave no details of the number of Iraqi troops involved or the scale of the operation. Defense Ministry spokesperson Mohammed al-Askeri did not have details but said it had been launched as Maliki's request.

"Security is very weak there and the security forces need to be reinforced," Askeri said.

Iraq Interim Ministry spokesperson Abu Isra Abdul-Kareem Khalaf said the Mosul push would include 3,000 extra police.

Iraqi security officials to the city said no reinforcements had arrived yet.

US and Iraqi troops have launched a series of offensives in northern provinces this year targeting al-Qaeda in Iraq.

The US military tells the group, which commanders say is largely foreign led, the biggest threat to Iraq's security. The military said this week that al-Qaida militants killed 5,819 civilians and wounded almost 18,000 in 1,100 attacks last year.

"We defeated al-Qaeda, now there is just Nineveh province where they escaped to, and Mosul," Maliki said, referring to another northern city.

During his trip to Kerbala, Maliki met Sheikh Abdul Mehdi al-Karbalai, a representative of Iraq's top Shiite cleric Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani. Karbalai was lightly wounded in a bomb attack in the city late on Thursday.

Maliki called the bombing a "criminal act."

US military commanders say al-Qaeda's influence in its former strongholds has been greatly diminished but that it remains a dangerous enemy in Mosul and other northern areas.

Despite frequent attacks in northern Iraq, overall violence has fallen sharply across the country, with the number of attacks down 60 percent since last June.

The fall in attacks has been credited to an extra 30,000 US troops that became fully deployed last June, the growth of neighborhood police militias from Anbar province to Baghdad and better Iraqi security forces.

"Now we have a real army. The days when the militants could do anything in front of our armed forces are gone," Maliki said.

US commanders in northern Iraq said Friday Karbala's massive blast, which left a crater the size of a multi-storey building, was in an unoccupied building they said was used by al-Qaeda to store weapons and tons of explosives.

On Thursday, the Nineveh provincial police director was killed by a suicide bomber as he entered the city of the original blast. Reuters

UNLIKELY PLAYMATES A cat, that is up for adoption at the Humane Society gets a little love from a puppy that is not ready for adoption, Friday, Jan. 25 in Searcy, Ark. The Searcy Animal Shelter had to put over 1,000 animals as sleep in 2007 because of the low number of people who open or contact their pets. AP

Police search rogue trader's apartment

PARIS—FRENCH POLICE SEARCHED the apartment of the Societe Generale rogue trader blamed for causing up a €7 billion loss on Friday, but his family said he was a scapegoat for the world's worst rogue trading scandal.

Jerome Kerviel, 31, has not been seen publicly since footage showed the financial world hoovering the record trading loss on Thursday, but a photograph of his frowning face has been splashed across newspapers and television screens.

Four plainclothed police officers were seen entering the third-floor apartment in the suburban Paris suburb of Neuilly and others they left, each carried a large briefcase. They identified themselves as police but declined further comment.

The mystery over Kerviel's whereabouts has sparked a massive media hunt, with journalists out in force in Neuilly his home town of Pont l'Abbe in Brittany and near his workplace in the capital's financial area of La Defense. A relative said he was in the Paris area and "not doing well." The crisis erupted on Thursday when SocGen said one of its most junior traders had wriggled through internal barriers to speculate massively on stock market bets around the bank's trading positions, which were eventually uncovered at the weekend.

It did not name the trader but his name quickly surfaced and was confirmed by sources at France's second largest bank.

Kerviel clearly leaps to his defense.

"He is a decent boy and ... is not in any way responsible for what he is accused of. He is being made to carry the blame, and he is not the guilty one. I am convinced of that," said one family member who declined to be named.

A lawyer acting for Kerviel said he was available to talk to police, unlike under 96h Lionel who went on the run after breaking British bank Barings with unfair market bets in 1995.

French commentators said he was an ordinary, hardworking guy.

"He was an average kind of person. When I arrived in the meeting, he was there, and when I left in the evening, he was still there," said one colleague who worked in the same section. Reuters

A GENERAL view of the headquarters of French bank Societe Generale is seen in the La Defense business center, near Paris. REUTERS

Iran faces travel bans, asset freezes

UNITED NATIONS—PROPOSED NEW US sanctions on Iran over its nuclear program call for travel bans on Iranian banks and asset freezes for specific Iranian officials and vigilance on all banks in Iran, according to a draft text.

The text of "elements" of a third round of sanctions, obtained by Reuters on Friday, was agreed on by Britain, France, Germany, the United States, Russia and China and will be the basis of a resolution intended for the Security Council to pass in the next few weeks.

Western powers had to soften some proposed measures to meet Chinese and Russian demands. But European Union and US diplomats said their core the latest step in a gradual expansion of sanctions against Iran and would almost certainly be followed by further penalties if Tehran remained defiant.

Foreign ministers of the five permanent Security Council members and Germany agreed on the outline in Berlin on Tuesday and their text was circulated on Friday to the 10-nonpermanent council members.

Western countries say Iran's refusal to stop enriching uranium supports their suspicion that Tehran is seeking nuclear weapons. Iran says its nuclear program is peaceful and has ignored repeated UN demands that it cease enrichment.

"It's a strong draft proposal which demonstrates the continuity of the approach of the international community," said Tehran's UN ambassador, Javad Mousavi-Nejad.

"We are sending a very clear signal to Iran and we are increasing the pressure," he said in a statement. Reuters

Obama, Clinton await fates in South Carolina

COLUMBIA, S.C.—SOUTH CAROLINA Democrats cast votes on Saturday in a bitter presidential nominating race with Barack Obama leading rival Hillary Clinton in polls and counting on heavy black support to carry him to a crowded victory.

Recent surveys of more than 1,000 voters suggested that Obama, a first-term senator from Illinois, was likely to make up about half of the electorate. Polls close at 7 p.m., with results available soon afterward.

"I am absolutely convinced that we can win here, and we can win anywhere in the country," Obama, an Illinois senator, said at a late night rally in Columbia that capped a week spent campaigning heavily across the state.

South Carolina is the latest test for Obama and Clinton, a New York senator, in their quest to win the Democratic right to represent the Democratic Party in November's presidential election.

After two consecutive losses, in New Hampshire and Nevada, Obama needs a win on Saturday if he hopes to head into the Feb. 5 "Super Tuesday" contests in 22 states with a realistic chance of victory.

The high stakes fueled a week of angry accusations, harsh advertisements and increasingly personal jabs between the two candidates, capped by a volley of attacks on Obama from Clinton's husband, former President Bill Clinton.

Obama accused the Clintons of distorting his record and angrily fired back with a radio ad charging "Hillary Clinton will say anything to get elected." "Campaigns are contentious," Hillary Clinton told reporters on Friday in Rock Hill, South Carolina. "There is a perfectly legitimate role for drawing contrasts, for pointing to people's records, for scrutinizing the record." The other candidates in the Democratic race, former North Carolina Sen. John Edwards, chanted his two rivals for their squabbling and ran ads promising himself as the grown-up in the contentious nominating battle.

A Reuters/C-SPAN/Zogby poll on Monday showed Obama with a 41 percent to 26 percent edge over Clinton in South Carolina, with Edwards in third place with 19 percent.

The lead for Obama, who would be the first black US president, is fueled by his 62 percent support among black voters, the poll found. Clinton and Edwards are tied among white voters at 35 percent, with Obama at 18 percent. Reuters

TRIBE RITUAL Aboriginal dancers perform in the Wagga-ma-gala (meeting of the waters) Morning Ceremony on the traditional sacred land of the Gadigal people as part of Australia Day celebrations in Sydney on Jan. 26. Newly elected Prime Minister Kevin Rudd is promised to say sorry to Aborigines for past injustices, reversing an 11-year policy under the previous conservative government which plunged race relations. AFP/FILE

Astronomers to get rare look at asteroid

WASHINGTON—A SMALL asteroid will travel relatively near to Earth next week, giving astronomers a rare opportunity for a close-up look at the space rock.

Around 2007 TU24 was first seen in October and is on a trajectory to pass Earth outside the Moon's orbit at a distance of 537,500 kilometers on Tuesday at 3:33 a.m.

The US space agency's Nasa said it will not be visible to the naked eye but amateur astronomers with modest-sized telescopes should be able to spot it.

Nasa said the asteroid is anywhere between 150 and 410 meters long, and there is no chance it could hit the planet.

Astronomers at the Arecibo Observatory in Puerto Rico will be making an observation between 11:00 am. and 4:00 pm. local time.

"We don't yet know anything about this asteroid," Mike Nolan, head of radar astronomy at the Puerto Rico observatory said in a statement.

He said such objects frequently pass near Earth, perhaps as many as three years out of six, but such arduous events are rare.

TU24 is one of an estimated 7,000 so-called near-Earth objects.

"We have good images of a couple dozen objects like this, and for about one in 10, we can say something we've never seen before," said Nolan.

"We really haven't sampled the population enough to know what's out there," Mike Asia, it will be nearly 20 years before such an opportunity presents itself again.

"That will be the closest approach by a known asteroid of this size or larger until 2027," said Don Yeomans, manager of the Near Earth Object Program Office at Nasa's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, which monitors for objects that could potentially threaten Earth. Reuters

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SMART
THE POWER TO LEAD

Sunday SPORTS
Editor
Teddyboy S. Melendres

WILLIE Miller (left) of Alaska hopes to do what he did against Air Bubble and the Coca-Cola Tigers in the quarterfinals: Soar high and lead the team to victory in the semis.

Aces, Barako challenge top semifinalists

By Marvyn B. Corvilla

BOYET FERNANDEZ SAID HIS SYD. LUCIA crown is ready for anyone. Alaska's Tim Cone sounded quite the opposite.

"I'm just shocked that we're going to play on Sunday (today)," Cone said Friday night, moments after steering his Aces to a sweep of Coca-Cola and a semifinal date opposite the well-rested Beermen in the Smart PBA Philippine Cup.

"Obviously, the logical thing is for us to [start semifinal play on] Wednesday, because [we] ran out of the [quarterfinal] series [over the distance, we would have played Wednesday," Cone added.

"Right now, we are the Coke [Tigers] in this series," said Cone, who will guide the Aces to a third game in six days in their 6:45 p.m. clash with the Beermen that formally takes the lid off the tournament's final four at the sun-drenched Cuneta Astrodome in Pasay.

"We are prepared to play against either Alaska or Coke," Fernandez told the boys-to-men the phrase Friday night, when asked if he liked his semifinal foe. "But frankly, we have started preparing for Alaska since Wednesday."

Red Bull mugs with elimination squeeze or Purefoods in the other best-of-seven series at 6:30 p.m.

And the Beermen, according to coach Yeng Guiao, will be entering into the series free of any pressure to win.

"Because guest on a second look at the start of the tournament," said Guiao, who is still looking for his first All-Filipino title. "It's not about the big names and their big salaries, but the big heart."

The Beermen completed a 2-0 whitewash of powerhouse Magnolia in the quarterfinals which the Tigers later duplicated against the Tigers.

Curiously, both Guiao and Fernandez, whose teams have yet to win all-Filipino titles, will be coming into their respective series against squads who have rich histories in the tournament but have never beaten them in two meetings here.

"I think that could be our advantage, aside from being well rested," Fernandez said. "My players know that we can beat Alaska and we have the better legs going into the series."

"There's no doubt that having just one (win) day in-between (Alaska) creates demand is difficult," Cone explained.

Cone hopes that his players don't falter as hard as the Tigers did against his Aces, when Coca-Cola had to play a string of games from late in the elimination to the wild card phase.

"The shoe is now on the other foot," Cone added. "Right now, we are the fatigued team coming into that series."

Garnett powers Celtics past his former squad

BOSTON—KEVIN GARNETT SCORED 18 points and had 16 rebounds, returning to the Boston bench late in the game to help seal the Celtics's 87-86 win over his former team on Friday.

Garnett, who suffered an abdominal strain in the fourth quarter, scored all of his 18 points in the first half.

After retiring to the dressing room to consult with doctors, he emerged shortly after to make a big defensive play and assure the Celtics' win over the Minnesota Timberwolves.

Kendrick Perkins scored 21 points as Boston reached the halfway point of its season with an National Basketball Association-best 34-7 mark.

"This was a real emotional game because of the history between these two teams," said Garnett, who proudly showed off his Celtic jersey after the horn. "I'm in Boston. I don't play for Minnesota anymore. We were at home, and it was a huge win."

Garnett was a 14-time All-Star in 12 seasons in Minnesota and is the franchise's all-time leader in points, rebounds, assists, blocks and steals.

The Timberwolves, meanwhile, have

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SMART

Top Aiba official slams Thailand boxing organizers

By Recah Trinidad

BANGKOK—THE HIGHEST RANKING international amateur boxing official present here spent official time Friday berating the messy opening of the Asia Olympic Boxing Qualifying tournament, short of announcing that Thailand has no business hosting the prestigious regional event.

International Amateur Boxing Association (AIBA) executive director Ho Kim, who rushed to the tournament venue directly from the airport, said he was insulted by what he saw upon arriving at the Dhurakij Pundit University gym.

Their wary cheers and requests for directions would lead to more questions.

Kim, responsible for getting the Philippines readmitted to the tournament after it was disqualified allegedly for failing to submit entries on time, said the lousy conduct of events was a shame to Aiba.

"There's no secretariat, no media center, no accreditation, how could you go on this way?" Kim, in blue suit, barked upon entering a small room that was supposed to serve as media center.

He claimed the lone computer in the room and said media people present actually had no business being inside because it was his office.

"I will allow you here today, but tomorrow, you can no longer work here," he told press people that included three reporters from Manila.

The head of organizational responsibilities has obviously been left to a bunch of neophytes.

Aiba president Mr. Ching-kuo is scheduled to arrive here on Jan. 28 and Kim, in speaking louder than his grandson, warned that those at fault would be put to task.

Kim said he would make a critical report to the next Aiba central board meeting.

"We hold ultrasonic events a lot here," said the Iran's Dante Simonian.

Together with Willy Cabello of the Manila Bulletin and your reporter here, Simonian had to wrestle his boats piecing together succeeding schedules as there was no available list of participants and their weights, a must in all international meets of this magnitude, was unavailable on the first day.

There were late minute changes, like the cutting down of available Olympic slots have from 22 to 18, but media people had to do their own digging.

Kim and his aides were meeting local organizers in an emergency meeting after the first day preliminary bouts.

OLYMPIC QUALIFIER

Payla bows out by RSC-O

BANGKOK—FLYWEIGHT VIRGILIO Payla put up another shallow reasoning stand to suffer the second fabulous defeat of his career yesterday, when he bowed to Asaver Yunusov of Tajikistan (RSC-4), 36-180 and became the first Filipino casualty on the second day of the Asian Olympic Qualifying tournament here.

Payla, 29, an Athens Olympian and winner of the gold in the last Asian Games, had been favored to advance but he proved a defenseless target against the younger, sharper Yunusov who made splendid use of his reach advantage.

Yunusov, with longer arms and taller by a full head, started to toll Payla with clear shots and a few slugs in the opening round before proceeding to dominate in the second round when the desperate RP veteran pinched blindly, clowning and often leading with his head.

Powra 10-4 edge in the first round, Yunusov blitzed in a 22-8 edge in the second before toning it into a complete mismatch that was automatically stopped after the electronic score board registered a 38-13 edge while Payla, mentally reeling a series of punches with 35 seconds left in the third round.

"Pumatulo siya (He was caught flat-footed)," said RP coach Pat Gaspi as shoots started to engulf the RP delegation at Dhurakij Pundit University gym.

Making in a dreary, ball-lit corner for their bouts in the same day 2 program Saturday were featherweight Jean Tipon, who was to face opening day winner Shukrono Alphanazer of Uzbekistan, and featherweight Orlando Tacoguin, Jr., who will be up against Gulzhanat Jakubov, the 2003 world champion.

Completing the RP preliminary assignments on Sunday are lightweight Ronniboy Rimando and 81-Asian light welterweight Armand Nguevara Del.

"Bahasa tayo (We will be back)," Gaspi added after regaining composure.

He said it was not the first time they had seen Payla's mechanical responses as Yonnasse had already fought RP's Godfrey Castro in another boxing tournament.

"Masyadong kabisado, talagang nabasa na ang kalaban (The opponent was simply too cold)," Gaspi explained.

What clearly mattered in Payla's defeat by swagger, his first in memory, was the evident deterioration of his speed and skills.

Payla, at 26, is the most senior among the RP fighters seeking a berth in the Beijing Olympics Feather Division.

Gaspi did not but an eyelash in considering that Payla will aim for one more try his luck in the last Asian Olympic qualifying tournament in Kazakhstan next March.

VIRGILIO Payla, seen in this file photo dominating Raj Salzabar during the national championships, fails in his bid to garner a slot to the Beijing Olympics after losing to the Bangkok Asian qualifier.

THE PHILIPPINE Navy dragonboat team receives the Manila Dragons Cup from Manila Dragons Team Manager Raul Bunnagong, for topping the men's crew category.

Dragons Cup breathes fire to 2008 boat racing season

THE SECOND MANILA DRAGONS CUP 2008, which will kick off the country's dragon boat race season, gets going next month as the pair-amegan 10-kilometer main stadia lake of The Lakeshore in Manila, Pampanga.

Slated on Feb. 24, the event will feature three crew competing categories: The Men's International, the Women's International and the Elite.

At stake are medals, cash prizes and the coveted Manila Dragons Cup.

"Paddling a distance of approximately 2.5 kilometers in the heavy waters of a transcanda lake will surely be a challenge to any dragon boat team, compounded by the sewer at banks to be made in designated training points to complete the race," said Greg Dumanlas, Manila Dragon's Team Manager.

Participating in the Second Manila Dragons regatta are various university-based, civilian, and military dragon boat rowing teams from Manila, Camarines Sur and Boracay, Aklan, including the Philippine Navy men's crew and the Philippine National Police women's crew, both winners from the PSC-MO Cup in 2006.

The Manila Dragons Cup is a project of the Manila Dragons Dragonboat Rowing Team inc. with its advocacy of promoting a healthy lifestyle through sports, and its efforts to help promote and create awareness of the sports of dragon boat rowing in the country.

Charter change up in GA Wednesday

By Mark Anthony Reyes

CHARTER CHANGE, and not the Beijing Olympics, might just be top agenda when the Philippine Olympic Committee convenes in a general assembly in Wednesday, tap off rumi and vice-mayor.

JOSEPH

POC deputy secretary general Mark Joseph cited the importance of making amendments to the POC constitution and by-laws to "comply with the International Olympic Committee requirement and the private development push for POC."

The changes expected to be proposed in the GA are in aspects of medical tools, arbitration and anti-doping.

Joseph said there are other "things that adapt to new strategic directions like the Philippine Olympic Festival" launched last year that will also be tackled.

POC first vice president and Beijing Games delegation chief of mission Rep. Monico Puentevella said the Olympics will also be saddled less merely to "achieve re-

sources of what is happening."

The move to change the POC charter, according to Joseph "is aligned with the IOC already amended its charter in 2004 and has been asking POC about the status of our charter for [your] new It's being rewritten."

However, sources inside the POC said there will be opposition with any move to change the constitution which would automatically require national sports associations to synchronize their setup to accordance with that of the POC.

In effect, the sources added, it would afford the terms of the officials of the NSA presidents, some of whom have been staying in their position for more than 10 years.

"We need a charter that is more than just the one written in reaction to the impeachment of former president Cory Aquino-Jolanvi years ago," said Joseph.

He added that such a move would require a special GA for the general purpose of amending the POC charter.

Chiang Kai Shek notches 4th Tiong Lian win

DEFENDING CHAMPION CHIANG Kai Shek College came through with crushed UBG High School, 90-76, on Friday to grab the seles lead in the 32nd Metro Manila Tiong Lian Basketball Tournament at the UBG High School gym.

With 6-foot-6 Justin Dizz imposing his will inside the paint and Arnold Shih, Steve Chua, John Lachica and John Capati making their outside jumpers, Chiang Kai Shek ripped the game wide open in the third quarter for its fourth straight victory.

The feisty 6-marooned Chiang Kai Shek College can claim an outright semifinal berth by winning its last two assignments.

The loss was the first for UBG rogers in four games, allowing Xavier School to forge a two-way tie for second and third place in the tournament sponsored by Healthy Options, Inc., Puma, Gatorade, Bathaglion, FG Jeans, Mikasa, Darien Motors and ABC Internet and Solar Sports.

It was actually the 13th straight win for Chiang Kai Shek dating back to its grand sweep of the championship last year, where it won nine straight games.

After absorbing a 37-29 loss to Chiang Kai Shek in the opener, Xavier, behind the efforts of RP Youth aspirants Jesse Teng and Gabriel Banal, won its next three games to tie UBG High School for second.

Cage author joins medical mission in Mindanao

THE TEXT MESsage from San Francisco was unexpected.

Christian Bocobo, the 32-year-old sports medicine doctor who co-authored the book "Legends and Stories of Philippine Basketball," said he is coming to the Philippines for a medical mission in Mindanao.

He didn't know exactly where, he said, because they will be moving from place to place, but the group will be there for five days, after which he will fly to Manila and maybe visit relatives.

* * *

I didn't hear from Christian for five days. When he finally called, he said they were too busy treating thousands of patients daily.

Christian said the patients came from different parts of Mindanao, who traveled by land and sea.

"Many of them are perhaps major and minor surgeries such as extracting bullets and tumors."

The close to 200 medical professionals composed of doctors, dentists and nurses of various race and creed, were led by Dr. Danny Lim and did most of their treatment in the Almendras Gym, except for major surgeries which had to be performed in a hospital.

While the conditions were not exactly ideal, Christian only had superlatives for the Davao City mayor whose name he forgot at first.

Christian described him as a "real-a" mayor.

"Ummm, that's the name," he said.

* * *

I forgot to ask if the Philippine Marines were there as patients or had been assigned in the venue to provide security.

Christian just wouldn't stop talking about how big their guns were. He said he has never seen guns as big as those they carried.

Anyway, I'm glad there are people like Christian and the other doctors who were with him in Mindanao taking time out and going out of their way to provide their expertise free to those who cannot afford it. May their tribe increase!

Incidentally, chairman Abe Ring of the PBA Legends Foundation USA also plans to bring a medical mission to the Philippines this year.

* * *

Boxing and basketball scholar Teddy Reynoso wants to say that fan choice for the PSA's Athlete of the Year in boxer Manny Pacquiao, "simply because he has continued his reputation inside the ring which has caught the attention and imagination of his co-boxers, fans and boxing promoters all over the world.

"Denied of the same award in 2006, Pacquiao remains the yardstick by which other athletes should be measured," Teodoro included... are announced."

* * *

Armenian boxer Vic Darchinyan, born when Boxers weighed the world flyweight title, has never prepared his trip to the Philippines for some reason.

Darchinyan was first scheduled to arrive in Cebu for his Feb. 2 fight against J. "The Dream" Gerwin on Jan. 26. The date was moved to the 28th.

This afternoon, we got word that there had been another change in schedule, and instead of the 28th, Darchinyan is coming on the 29th.

This morning on radio, we conducted a mini-survey on the Darchinyan-Gerwin fight. The general consensus is that if the fight lasts 12 rounds, Gerwin successfully evading Darchinyan's knockout punch, would win.

Others say his Ambabuyan, has the hometown edge and the ultimate going for him. The fight is scheduled at the Sta. Catherine Hotel in Cebu.

Juvic virtual champ with 6-stroke lead

By Herceg B. Castillo

SILVA, LAGUNA—JUVIC PAGUNsan's star career-perfect run as a day he was supposed to be most vulnerable.

Coming off a mediocre second round and with a slew of previous rivals to contend, Pagunsan put together another round to complete total of ten clipped the sixth The Country Club tournament champion early in the big.

The 29-year-old 2004 champion fired a flawless five-under-par 65 in another rainy day in the wind-raked The Country Club course here and fashioned a two-shot overnight lead to an with just 18 holes left in the Philippines' richest tournament outside of its annual championship.

Most have conceded already, except for the three-day leader himself, who has a 54-hole 201 total.

"Everyday is a different day," said Pagunsan, also the 2006 Asian Tour Rookie of the Year. "We really cannot say. I do have the advantage, but in this course, anything can still happen. It will all depend on how the wind blows (today)."

Juvic's nearest foe Dipsomman rounded a 66 and vaulted to second at 207 with defending champion Angelo Que nine strokes behind in third at 210 after a 67.

After being a T2 on Friday that saw his four-shot lead shrink to just two, Pagunsan resumed his second bogey-free round, subtracting signs of 32-33 to joins himself up on the first player ever to win the P4.5 million event.

Juvic's effort yesterday was just one shot shy of the course record he matched with his opening round 64. But the lanky ex-caddy said that it was one of his most memorable performances—even better than his Thursday effort.

"This was much better than my 64 on Thursday, because the conditions were so difficult," Juvic said.

Miracle

"It would be a miracle if I ever catch up with him," Sky Pagunsan said at 53-plus. "But whatever happens in the final round, I still love him. He will still be my favorite nephew!"

The 30-year-old Sky, one of the longest hitters in the country who helped coach Juvic the basics of the game back in Bicolnd, came home with a 33 to remain the only other player under par at this point.

Que, who won this tournament with a three-under total last year and predicted a low-scoring event this year, said: "Malayo ito (fairways is look) kaya fun ahead."

And while the Dipsomman kept their lofty standings, Pacay still downward as he submitted a 74 to drop to joint fifth at 212 after failing to solve the slippery greens and tricky pin placements.

"That's golf," the 36-year-old Pacay, who had five bogeys against a solitary birdie and found himself trailing by 11 strokes. "I had a lot of lines on the greens today. Things worked well, except on the greens and that did not me."

It was another punishing day on the long course yesterday, though five players managed to break par and three more matched 70.

Cancun Cesar, the inaugural runner, had a chance to inch closer but fumbled bogey-double bogey for a 71 that left

Jester along in fourth spot at 213.

Founder Alfonso, the returned Asian #34, conceded par for the first time in three rounds, but still picking him 3-life spot at 215, two ahead of the 11th-running Cirilo Diamond, who fired a 75.

The stroke:

201—Pagunsan (64-33-32) 207—Que (67-33-33) 210—Dipsomman (66-37-33) 212—Pacay (74-34-34) 213—Jester (68-37-33) 214—Cesar (71-36-37) 215—Alfonso (68-37-33) 216—Diamond (70-37-34) 217—Mendoza (71-37-34) 218—Gonzalez (69-37-32) 219—Cruz (68-37-34) 220—Ramos (68-37-35) 221—Bautista (71-37-34) 222—Ramos (68-37-35) 223—Lim (71-37-34) 224—Ramos (68-37-35) 225—Ramos (71-37-34) 226—Ramos (68-37-35) 227—Ramos (71-37-34) 228—Ramos (68-37-35) 229—Ramos (71-37-34) 230—Ramos (68-37-35) 231—Ramos (71-37-34) 232—Ramos (68-37-35) 233—Ramos (71-37-34) 234—Ramos (68-37-35) 235—Ramos (71-37-34) 236—Ramos (68-37-35) 237—Ramos (71-37-34) 238—Ramos (68-37-35) 239—Ramos (71-37-34) 240—Ramos (68-37-35) 241—Ramos (71-37-34) 242—Ramos (68-37-35) 243—Ramos (71-37-34) 244—Ramos (68-37-35) 245—Ramos (71-37-34) 246—Ramos (68-37-35) 247—Ramos (71-37-34) 248—Ramos (68-37-35) 249—Ramos (71-37-34) 250—Ramos (68-37-35) 251—Ramos (71-37-34) 252—Ramos (68-37-35) 253—Ramos (71-37-34) 254—Ramos (68-37-35) 255—Ramos 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JUVIC Pagunsan smashes to relocate his smoke before proceeding to leave the field in The Country Club tournament praying.

Year's first stakes race kicks off

THE YEARS FIRST STAKES RACE, THE 2008 Philracom Gamed-Blacks off today at the San Lazaro Leisure Park in Carmona, Cavite.

The event will feature the country's top cattle breeders that will compete in the 1,000-meter journey for the Lapulapu of P500,000.

Read Sports owned by Hermie Esguerra is expected to battle for the coveted crown with Paolo Mendoza's Born Rocks and Antonio Tan's Native Land in the main event in today's 11-race card.

Also vying for the top prize are Edgar Medina's Manhattan, Moreno Santos' B's Playmaker (3M Books 31) and Hermie Reyes's Grand Master.

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Garnett powers Celtics past former squad

From page A23

plunged to the NBA basement and have a league-worst 7-33 record.

"It felt like I got ripped from the culture or something," Garnett said of the injury. "I just had a sharp pain come from my stomach and I just wanted the doctors to look at it."

"I wasn't going to jeopardize my future and all that, but my philosophy has always been that if I can play, if I can run, if I can move, if I can block...if I can make up in the morning, I'm going to play."

Garnett returned with the Celtics trailing 86-81, after Sebastian Telfair—one of five players traded for Garnett—made a scoop shot with just over two minutes left.

Paul Pierce made a pair of free throws and then had a put-back on the Celtics' 10th offensive rebound of the possession to pull the home team to 88-86 with 2:12 to play.

Just recording to get the ball to Rondo, Minnesota showed its teeth as rookie Corey Brewer was rebuffed for a five-second violation, giving Boston a chance to reclaim the lead for the first time since early in the fourth.

Pierce's jumper Minnesota put for its mistake when he followed Pierce's miss seconds later for the final margin.

With one last try for their seventh-high third straight win, the Timberwolves were thwarted by Garnett, who knocked the ball from Telfair and into the backcourt as time expired.

"I was able to connect his dribbles and it went one, two, and I knew he'd have to recover, so I just took a risk at it and got it, and just dove for it, and I knew time was running down," Garnett said.

The sight of a 6-11 forward stripping a 6-0 point guard was notable to Boston coach Doc Rivers.

"Any time Big men's could've done that," Rivers said.

In Cleveland, Shaun Marion dropped in his only field goal of the game with 1.1 seconds left as the Houston Suns edged the Cleveland Cavaliers, 110-108.

The Suns banned the Cavaliers with a season-high 17 three-pointers.

Marion was 0-for-3 from the floor before he took a pass in the corner, dribbled past a defender and as LeBron James came around him, arched in his shot on the run to put the Suns ahead.

The Suns improved to 17-2 against Eastern Conference teams.

In other games, it was Toronto 106, Milwaukee 78; Washington 104, Memphis 93; New York 89, Philadelphia 83; Detroit 103, Orlando 93; New Orleans 113, LA Clippers 92; Charlotte 90, Chicago 77; Dallas 112, LA Lakers 108; Denver 100, New Jersey 85; Utah 127, Sacramento 113; Houston 99, Portland 79 and Atlanta 95, Seattle 90.

POLO ACTION: Jun Jolmes of the Green team is on the offensive as teammate Jun Bautista looks on at the Alabang Country Club. At right is Sonny Barrameda of the White side's president near the Green. 4-A Also in photos: Argentinian referee and professional polo player Daniel Donovan. Other members of the victorious team are Freddy Barrameda, Butch Albert, Gabby Reyes and Miguel Cuenca. Antonio Matti and Ferrari Villaraz also saw action for the Green team.

Local golfers face acid test in DHL Am

WITH SOME OF THE NATIONAL MEN'S team members away for preparations, Ronnie Alcalde, Mark Hernandez, Nestor Asuncion and Gene Bondoc hope to carry out the mission against foreign rivals when the DHL-WWF Express National Amateur Golf Championships is staged Jan. 29 at Lakegolf's north course in Laguna.

Reigning national champion Adriano Bravo-Ng and fellow RP and ICTSI members Hanib Bravo-Ng and Ballen Balayo are currently in Australia competing in the Lake Macquarie Men's Amateur.

But the depth of the local field remains as intact as ever with Alcalde and company out to defend the turf against the likes of Qatar Qasir Al Hajeri and Bahrain's Waqr Al Hakeem in the second event, sponsored by DHL and WWF Express.

Meanwhile, the NGAP has extended the deadline for listing to Jan. 26 with the battle for the men's colmar rankings starting the day after. Call the ladies' circle of the event will begin on Wednesday, Jan. 30.

For details, call NGAP at 5256987 and 5268140, Jan 5211887 and Gargolf at (049) 5404.863.

P7-M San Juan derby gets going today

ALL EYES LEAD TO SAN JUAN Coliseum today when the 2008 LK International 9-Cock Derby chute go-ahead hours off at 11 a.m. with more than 320 fights on tap.

No less than P7 million in guaranteed prize plus a brand new Honda City car are the winners as the coveted breeding international cockfest, and host and LK owners Rodolfo Fuentebella.

Surprisingly, undecided between two

From page A23

times to dominate the event, among them Jesse Dimaraga, Bargy Tolentino, Cris Cardin and Ric Bey Adolfo, each with 4-0 (win-loss) slates.

Also with four wins are the entries of Eric dela Rosa and Tatty Pelaez, Dan Dy, Boy de Leon and Magno Lim, Eddy Valencia and Tony Lucita.

Jun Garay and Grady Mabaise of Team posted three wins and one loss

to remain in contention for the title while Rocky Salo posted 3-1 points.

Meanwhile, the Sagupan International 3-cock derby of Amy Leuban unfolds on Wednesday, Jan. 30 with the full backing of Governor Oscar Orbos and Association of the Philippines.

More details: the 7 Mill Pesos Win One-Cock Derby on Friday, Feb. 1 with P750,000 on the line. For more info: 7255.009 and 7256563.

WALK WALK GOLF and Country Club president Lim B. Tan hammers away at the ceremonial ball in the 18th Hole Glow Golf Classic played at the Walk Walk Golf and Country Club, shooting that starts to do the ceremonial drive are CATS Motors president Felix Ang (third from left) and PR director Joey Arrieta (second from right), who are joined at the sidelines by sports and games committee members.

Mango Tee bars 'unlicensed' drivers

ONLY LEGAL DRIVERS WILL BE allowed to hit this year's Mango Tee.

Organizers of the Mango Tee announced this yesterday in an early warning to their players as the 22nd edition of the Alabang Country Club's members-guests tilt set Feb. 6-10.

Mango Tee chair Gaby Concolleda said the tournament never follow other members-guest events around the country that have been quite lenient on the use of save drivers.

This year, the R&A has disallowed the use of certain drivers produced after 1999 which exceeds limits or coefficient of restitution, thereby producing a spring-like effect.

The complete list of banned clubs can be viewed at R&A website www.randa.org.

"In the R&A reminds everyone, it is the player's responsibility to ensure that his/her equipment conforms to the Rules of Golf," said Concolleda.

A player found using an illegal driver will be disqualified.

Filipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. and Smart Infinity are co-sponsoring the tourney expected to offer a prize package of nearly P5 million.

Four brand new Mitsubishi cars from Glenmore and cars from The Tent Company (Team Eagle), Easy Plans (Nanshin) and Club Car make up the bonanza of hole-in-one rewards.

Meanwhile, 167 flowers, 40013, Inc., Pony B.C. Capacres & Associates, Petrobeck, Linkedge, Sea Air and AEL/Philam Savings Bank have joined the growing list of backers as regular hole sponsors.

Major sponsors are Mobil Sholine, Goldcrest, Philippine Airlines and Participants. Chairmen and Toronto are the premier sponsors while the premium hole sponsors are Coca Cola, Gulf Iron, PT Grand Co., Fairchild Group, AG21, Security Bank/Ginore Club and ISG Bank.

A 30
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
SUNDAY, JANUARY 27, 2008
Sunday SPORTS

Editor: Teddyboy S. Melendrez

Sharapova turns a chance into a shining moment

MARIA Sharapova proves she isn't content to let an opportunity, beating Ana Ivanovic in the final. REUTERS

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA—MARIA SHARAPOVA walked on court for the Australian Open final, she kept thinking about the tragic advice of another champion.

"Champions take chances, and pressure is a privilege," Billy Jean King had written in a note message that Sharapova saw when she woke up.

"I took mine," fifth-ranked Sharapova said after beating Ana Ivanovic, 7-5, 6-2, Saturday for her third Grand Slam title.

As she did throughout the tournament—she didn't lose a set in seven matches—Sharapova was clearly determined that nothing would stop her after winning only three games against Serena Williams in last year's final.

She wasn't as sharp as when she ended top-ranked Justine Henin's 32-match winning streak in the quarterfinals or beat No. 3 Jelena Jankovic in the semifinals. But there was no doubt she deserved to win.

"I did the things I needed to do in order to win the match," Sharapova said, making it sound a lot more simple than it was.

Ivanovic, who at 20 is the same age as Sharapova and will rise to No. 2 when the new rankings come out, was left veiled to silver lining.

"You still young and I still think I have a lot of Grand Slam finals in front of me," she said. "It hurts a bit now, but I'm sure I can learn lessons."

Now Serbia's hopes for a title here rest with No. 3 Novak Djokovic, who knew somewhat Jo-Wilfried Tsonga, the tournament's big surprise, in the men's final Sunday evening.

Ivanovic, Fabrik and Andy Roni became the first fourth doubles pairing to win a Grand Slam when they outlasted Michael Llodra and Arnaud Clement 7-5, 7-6 (4) Saturday.

Sharapova's 2004 Wimbledon title made her only the second Russian woman to win a major—just weeks after teammate Svetlana Kuznetsova the French Open.

Her win over Ivanovic was the 18th major by a Russian woman.

Sharapova first met Graf, winner of 39 singles and doubles Grand Slam titles, at a juniors tournament when she was 12 or 14.

"From that point on, she's just always been really supportive," Sharapova said of Graf. "It says a lot of the kind people to text me when either I'm having a rough moment or a great one."

Her first, exactly same day Sharapova returned to the shade behind the linesmen to serve poison. It was Australia Day, so typical, we put small national flags at each seat, but there were plenty of Serbian and Russian flags, too.

Both players showed some nerves: Sharapova simply more consistent. She had only two more winners than Ivanovic but less than half so many as the tireless 6'1 tall attacker was.

"I know Ivanovic aggressive, another type of game will obviously create more mistakes," Ivanovic said. AP

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EMOTIONS run high during the awarding ceremony with Maria Sharapova savoring the sweetness of victory and Ana Ivanovic risking a second thoughts.

'Joker' meets 'Ali' for crown with Federer nowhere in sight

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA—THE AUSTRIAN Open Stadium is a Muhammad Ali lookalike who has dazzled the crowds with his orchestration and his ability to change the pace of a match.

The other is best known for his electrifying on-court antics such as impersonating Maria Sharapova.

And, surprisingly, neither is No. 1 ranked Roger Federer, who was finally stopped on match point of making an 11th straight Grand Slam final.

Instead, Sunday's final will feature Jo-Wilfried Tsonga, an effervescent French-man who routed No. 2 Rafael Nadal, against Novak Djokovic, who upset two-time defending champion Federer on Friday.

A final without Federer? What will that be like?

"Extreme a lot to see some new faces in the finals," said Djokovic, a 20-year-old Serb now considered the favorite against the unseeded Tsonga. "The dominance of Federer and Nadal was just stunning the last couple of years. So I think it's good for tennis lovers all around the world to see something new."

And new it there will emerge with a Grand Slam title.

The 22-year-old Tsonga, with a French mother and a father who was a semi-handball player for Congo, showed an aggressive style to be advanced through the field in Melbourne.

He defeated No. 9 Andy Murray in the first round, No. 8 Richard Gasquet in the fourth, No. 14 Mikhail Youzhny in the quarterfinals and Nadal in three sets in the semis.

TSONGA

DJOKOVIC

Tsonga's resemblance to a young Ali has been noted by many, and his bravado certainly matches that of the boxer.

Asked to predict how he might react in the final if things get tight in a fifth set, Tsonga replied with a smile: "If I win in three sets, I don't need to worry." AP

How can we protect them?
– Jaime Cardinal Sin

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■ **Keeping an eye on medical tourists** / B4

Sunday BIZ
Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Rupisan

BAGUIO'S flower festivals one of the few tourist-drawing festivities that operates without a Catholic root. It showcases the pre-Christian rituals and dances of the Cordillera.

Cordillera tribes 'realize' why they should not fear tourism

By Vivien Cabreza
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—AFTER years of viewing tourism with suspicion, cultural workers now say Cordillera communities need not fear the tourism industry because what they've been instrumental in keeping traditional practices of the country alive.

Bonnie Sekdang, the Kalinga-born founder of the first government-sponsored school of living tradition in Baguio, says new generations of Cordilleras could rediscovered their fathers' old rituals and magic because of the tourism boom.

As a result, she says, villages had been encouraged to open their doors to foreign and domestic visitors.

Sekdang, 52, an advocate of authentic Igorot culture, lectured at a festival management workshop here that was sponsored by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) and assisted by experts from the Philippine Educators for Theatre Arts (PETA).

Using the city's annual Panagbenga Flower Festival float opens on Feb. 1, and the "Long Ago" Festival of Mt. Province as case studies, the workshop offered officials some techniques to help them tone their skills in organizing and presenting authentic native festivals, says Purificacion Molintas, director of the Department of Tourism in Benguet.

The DOT reported beating the agency's 2007 target with three million foreign tourists infusing more than P166 billion into the national coffers. Baguio should have earned P1,500 from each tourist who stays two nite days, according to Donaldina Phelda Cimafranca, chair of the city council's committee on tourism.

To attract more tourists to the summer capital, the DOT has halted tourism chair-holders with tax during the city jointly with the Poro Point International Airport in La Union, will afford open in mid-2008.

Community rituals

But most provinces fear that tourists and government-led tourism will interfere with or change community rituals, Sekdang says. This fear often compelled local governments to turn off or suspend projects that would have encouraged their tourism potentials, he said.

"We can avoid that cultural loss in tourism. The Spaniards used the Catholic Church's support to force pluralism on people because it was supposed to be un-Christian," he says.

Dr. Brenda Pajarda, a Ivatan visual artist-activist and workshop lecturer, says Philippine culture had a "multi-layered" flavor because it drew from a rich history dating back to pre-Hispanic times, a Catholic Church-established Spanish colonial era that lasted for nearly five centuries, and a

CONTINUED B2

Features in Brief

Guerrilla marketing seminar set

TRADITIONAL ADVERTISING, MARKETING and sales methods are no longer as effective as they used to be. With high costs and decreasing effectiveness, is there a solution to clear the clutter of marketing messages that consumers receive frequently?

William Reed, one of only three "guerrilla marketing" master trainers in the world, is coming to the country for a one-time afternoon session on "Guerrilla Marketing" on Thursday, Jan. 31, 2008 at the RCBC Plaza (6/F, La Salle Hall), RCBC Ayala Avenue, Makati City.

Reed, a bestselling author, will share his expertise on how to be noticed in an overstimulated market through Guerrilla Marketing.

Topics will include "Why we are in an Attention Deficit Economy, and how this problem threatens to take away your competitive edge."

The said seminar is organized by the Philippine Franchise Association (PFA). For details, call 687-2080 to 87.

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For inquiries call 896-8888, log on to www.antel.com.ph, or visit The Antel House Lounge showroom at 1040 Gen. Luna St. corner Makati Avenue, Makati City.

CLAUDIO Arnaldo became a coffee farmer at 69. He's now 81.

Coffee sent his 12 kids to school

ECHTE ONE YEAR OLD FARMER Claudio Arnaldo of Silang, Cavite is a late bloomer when it comes to coffee farming, picking it up in 1973 when he was already 46 years old.

His two hectares grew to nine; journeys replaced his carabao

"However, it was a move he did not regret since it improved his family's way of life.

"Planting coffee and selling them to Nescafe are two of the most important decisions I have made in my life," says Arnaldo in Tagalog. "It allowed me to send my 12 kids to school and to live comfortably."

He drinks a cup of coffee before doing his daily farm chores in Biga, Silang.

Arnaldo fondly remembers the time when all his kids would help picking out the coffee berries during Cavite's coffee harvest season from November to February. They would cook, roast or grilled seafood and pork, steam rice and fresh fruits in their makeshift vacation house in the middle of their coffee farm.

Unlike most of his neighboring farmers who sold their farm lots to real estate developers, Arnaldo affirms he will never sell his lots. He is glad that three of his kids have professed dedication in the family coffee farm.

"This farm has made us what we are today," says Arnaldo. "I am strong and healthy because of my daily morning work to this farm for more than 25 years."

Like most farmers in Cavite, Arnaldo planted pineapples all his life. In 1973, he decided to shift to coffee in his 2-hectare farm because the market price for the beans was high.

He first marketed his produce to retailers in the nearby palengke who sell the roasted and grinded coffee beans in a can.

It wasn't until the 1990s when he decided to sell his green coffee beans (GCBs) to Nescafe that life started a little smoother.

His 2-ha farmland grew into 9 ha and the carabao was replaced with two jeepneys and a pickup. Four of his children have also been able to migrate and work in the Irish Islands and the United Kingdom.

Arnaldo, who averages a harvest of 30,000 kilos of GCBs praying for the jackpot in 1997 when he enabled 12,000 kg.

Part of his earnings went to the purchase of a nineteen Honda Civic vehicle is now parked in a modest garage of his two-story house on Aguinaldo Highway.

"Nescafe has been a part of our success. I always cherish that every time I drink my coffee in the morning," concludes Arnaldo.

Nescafe turns 70 this year.

Cordillera tribes 'realize' ...

From page B1

65-year American colonial period.

The traditions these periods helped inculcate were immediately "Filipinized," which is why they lasted this long, Dujardo says.

New generations

But some today are also confronted by the fact that, in new generations of villagers, these rituals have lost their purpose, Sokkong says. He says he piloted the school of living traditions in Bogtio in 1998, hoping to reignite the youth's interest in their parents' culture.

"The project [which became the Cordillera Music Tutorial and Research Center] was established by the NCCA, but it took me a year just to find people who can teach authentic traditions, rituals and music," he says.

The school inspired the youth by focusing on Igorot dances and chants. Sokkong says, because music is connective to the new generation. "They also see that what we perform our dances, we showcase our sense of pride [as natives]."

Molintas says the festival workshop had become necessary because new interest in community-oriented tourism also required some measure of restraint from the people.

BENIGNO Sokkong

THE TOURISM industry has been instrumental in keeping traditional practices of the country alive.

'Commodifying' culture

A DOT concept paper for the workshop describes a "strong interrelationship of culture and tourism," but it prefers the "kinder" school of thought that culture can be used for promotional purposes, compared to another advocacy that opposes cultural acculturation through tourism.

According to Bajardo, tourism is inter-only an economic activity to both the government and the private sector, "but what is presented to the world is culture."

"That is dangerous. We cannot commodify our culture," she says.

She says there were tourism-oriented cultural performances that were staged due to "economic motivations." As a result, "numerous ang kabataan [culture has become meaningless]," she says.

Bajardo says this should not be the inevitable consequence of tourism. Communities can avoid it if they draw up programs that showcase their traditions "using institutions of your own and not the intervention imposed by outsiders," she says.

Emergence of Filipino digital artist

ENVISIONED TO GROW AT A MUCH faster pace due to the developments in film, publishing, animation, computer gaming, photography and advertising—employing more and more graphic, multimedia and web designers, 3D and 2D animators and cinematic artists—a career in digital arts can be one of the most lucrative jobs once the nursing boom.

A small but thriving community of Filipino graphic designers is impressing top-wigs abroad with their talents. Artists like Dan de Zuniga, who was worked for comic giants DC and Marvel, Theo Zoey whose film credits include the original TV version of "The Transformers" and X-Men; Ricky Nieva of Toy Story 2, Monsters Inc., and Finding Nemo, and Giovanni Bokgil who has worked in blockbusters like Van Helsing, Brown Cowboy and Star Wars are all highly esteemed in their respective fields. Another Filipino, Anthony Domingo, won a Visual Effect Society award for his work in the TV series "Tribes of Troy."

Back here, digital artists are employed as web designers, flash animators, creative lead and directors, 3D modelers and multimedia designers—hot jobs that pay big bucks.

Realizing the Filipinos' potential is summed in the field of digital arts here and abroad, the First Academy of Computer Arts is helping Filipinos realize their dreams of making it big in the industry by presenting an alternative career path that offers a high earning potential. The first and only computer training institute in the Philippines to offer Digital Arts, 3D Animation and Web Design certificate programs, the academy's digital arts curriculum is designed for the modern and multimedia artist and animator.

First Academy offers courses on Digital Arts, a comprehensive program that covers 2D/3D animation training on Print Media Arts, Advanced Graphic Arts and Animation Media Arts, Web Design using the latest in Web technologies and 3D Animation, which trains students to make their own movie clip using characters, background and treatments that they themselves have created. Short courses include Amateur Digital Filmmaking, Digital Photography, Digital Comics, Manga Illustration, Fashion Digital Arts and Digital Scrapbook.

The programs are taught by professional digital artists through practical and hands-on work using both Macintosh and Windows platforms, making it easy for its students to shift operating systems at any given time.

First Academy of Computer Arts is open for free workshop and consultation at its main headquarters located at 2/F Stella Building, 8736 Paseo de Roxas Avenue corner Jim. Gil Puyat (Buendia) Avenue, Makati City with tel. (632) 896-2724 to 26. Also visit their website at www.firstacademy.net for more information.

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Keeping an eye on medical tourists

From page B1

tried laser surgery to talk about it is the most effective way of promoting it," he said. "Besides, our models are not enough to do it for free."

The strategy worked: In no time, patients started coming in to undergo the procedure.

In November 2000, the vision...which by then had already grown to include several other eye treatments and medical staff...expanded its service offerings from just refractive surgery to become a world-class diagnostic, therapeutic and surgical eye facility.

Growing market

American Eye Center, according to Arroyo, is now one of the top five eye centers in Asia and No. 7 in the world in terms of the number of eye surgeries performed. As of end-2007, the center has operated on more than 25,000 eyes.

"Before, our patients were mostly older people, 60 years old and above. Today, younger people—even those in their late teens—go to the center for laser surgery," he says.

Although modern ocular diseases are frequently age related—macular degeneration, glaucoma, acute ophthalmological emergencies, low vision and pediatric ophthalmology)—have been increasing, 84 percent of American Eye Center's business is still laser surgery.

Attaction Eye Center's service expansion and move to the Ecka Plaza Shangri-La Mall had the medical tourism market in mind.

Arroyo is confident American Eye Center has a good chance of getting a chunk of the medical tourism market.

He has every reason to believe so. The center invested in state of the art technology and is a full-service ambulatory surgical facility accredited by both the Department of Health and the Philippine Health Insurance Corp. It has ownership centers in several major hospitals in Metro Manila.

There are still many things that need to be done to achieve the goal of making the Philippines a major hub for medical tourists, like addressing many perspective visitors' concerns over personal security and the lack of infrastructure, but the good thing is private industry players, like American Eye Center, don't just wait for these issues to be resolved, they are moving and doing their share in realizing this vision for the country.

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ALL SYSTEMS GO

PSIA's 2008 Planning Meeting at Innolab

It was time for the Philippine Software Industry Association to lay out its attack strategy for the global software development market which is now worth nearly $400 Billion. With historic powerhouse India looming, PSIA is nevertheless determined to push Philippine outsourcing advantages to new competitiveness.

The formation members of the Philippine Software Industry Association (PSIA) together with PLDT heads. Standing from L-R: Jose Collanta of PLDT, Ferdie Tanay of Converge, Raffaele Jose Mutia of Bluestarzone, Winston Cruz of Accenture, Rhino Gamano of Interim Generators Inc., Axel Aquino of PLDT, Luigi Lopa of PLDT, Lee Gonzalez of Concept Logic, Greg Lanne of Radio Systems, Calen Legaspi of Orange & Bronze, Kelly Pellargos of KMP Consulting, Lito Tayag of Incentsure, and Anthony Encomdero of PLDT.

Seated from L-R: Tess Tupaen of PLDT, Rhonilin Borges of Asian Business Solutions Inc., Rong Coronel of Technocel Technologies, Gina Galanga of CSG Alliance, Anne Go of PSIA, Rose Ferrado of Headstrong, the Heart of Computer Professionals Inc., and Hal Luna-Bedania of PLDT.

PLDT Capability Management Technical Manager, Lone Tapia demonstrates the SMOP powered wireless ETR.

PLDT Corporate Marketing Services Head Luigi Lopa explains the various Business Solutions as PSIA's Joe Guest looks on.

PLDT SME Group Head, Hal Luna-Bedania, graciously welcomed the participants of the 2008 PSIA Planning Session.

"good, effective, efficient and reliable telecommunications infrastructure is crucial to our operations."

And it was no less than a veritable who's who at PLDT's Innolab where PSIA met and planned for future issues, cooperation with private industry and government, as well as a cohesive international marketing strategy. The "secret" moment of course came when the main blinds were drawn to reveal PLDT Innolab's dramatic Traffic Management System showing the local and worldwide voice and data flows on real time. Between parties, some called it "the WAVE room." Here, it was shown to business behind closed doors.

The Philippine software industry is concentrated around systems application development as well as maintenance of legacy systems. PSIA was organized around the sole purpose of organizing the industry and to help members towards business objectives. Eventually, according to its charter, "it served as a forum for software industry players, to exchange information, address common issues, and promote global competitiveness."

Kat Luna-Bedania, PLDT SME Group Head, welcomed PSIA to its 1st planning session. "PSIA is a consortium of outsourcing and offshoring and is proudly 100% Filipino. PLDT shares in the same values and commits to PSIA as it embarks on a more innovation-centered focus for 2008."

She shared parallel PLDT competitiveness "will involve even better service levels" from this telco. Of particular note were the new SME-centric PLDT business solutions which PSIA members can use to great effect in their operations.

There took to be an optimistic fit for PSIA members and their target of "Fly high Philippine Software 2010." Regarding PSIA's continuing partnership with PLDT, incoming PSIA President Dong Coronel says, "We all know that having a good, effective, efficient and reliable telecommunications infrastructure is crucial to our operations. Any offshoring or outsourcing initiatives become so dependent on telecom organizations like PLDT."

Equally crucial for PSIA's 2008 meeting was to focus on Coronel's personal concerns on capability and brand building. "There are still aligned with our FLY HIGH goals. Capability building is not just limited to skills and talent (though these are still top priorities now and in the future) but cover all resources and infrastructure that will enable our industry to become truly global. This is where PLDT comes in."

PSIA Director Bo Umali expressed, "We at the PSIA are excited to have PLDT on board and we look forward to working with them on a variety of projects in the coming months."

Sunday BIZ

Keeping an eye on medical tourists

By Carlo Salonoso-Mariano

A GROUP OF DOCTORS WHO HAVE BEEN friends since their preschool days are among the many reasons why the Philippines stands a good chance of becoming a major destination for medical tourists.

Medical tourism is those who go to other countries to have a medical procedure performed because of the cheaper cost.

The American Eye Center was put up in 1995 by eye doctors Jack Arroyo, Victor Jose Capeton, Cesar Ramos Espina and Benjamin Cabrera. All four specialized in ophthalmology and went for further training here and abroad for their ophthalmologic subspecialties—Arroyo in Retinology, Espina surgery, Cabrera in lens replantation, cataract, diseases and cornea, Capeton in cornea and anterior segment surgery and cataract, and Espinda in cornea, cataract and uveitis.

Armed with his own expertise, the four-man team (the group prefers not to use "doctor") established the center, which now manages American Eye Center.

In its early years, the center's patients were mostly local residents but soon balikbayans and foreigners, mainly from Guam, and members of the diplomatic corps in the region started coming in.

The biggest concern was to market tourism to the low cost of the different medical procedures in the country. A Lasik surgery here, for instance, costs only about a third of the price tag for the same procedure in the US, which is about $2,000 per eye.

The American Eye Center is adopting a specific strategy to penetrate the medical tourism market. Although it already has patients from other countries, particularly the US, the center's current efforts are focused on the Japanese, Koreans and Taiwanese markets.

The center applies different approaches for each of these countries. For instance, Arroyo says, talks are ongoing with a Japanese-owned hotel in Manila for an arrangement that would introduce the facility to Japanese clients and convince them to come to the Philippines for treatment at the American Eye Center.

American Eye Center, which started as a refractive center, is one of the first to bring into the country the laser Lasik technology.

DR. JACK Arroyo

Strategy

The group, recognizing the need for marketing, pursued an innovative advertising campaign that highlighted personal testimonies of known individuals on how safe and successful their eyes laser surgeries have been. Those included former President Fidel V. Ramos, Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, Arroyo's uncle, Supreme Court Associate Justice Adolfo S. Azcuna, Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile's daughter Gigi Enrile, Dawn Zopilapan Rodrigo, Ramon and several showbiz people.

"Our advertising and marketing campaign focused on our technology and the doctors," says Arroyo, a Bell pioneer in American Eye Center and president of Associated Eye Specialists.

"We believe that getting people who have

SEE PAGE B4

THE LASIK, or eye-correction, the most popular procedure.

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Sunday LIFESTYLE
Also Ohio-based Filipinos

Neo-Japanese *sanctuary*

CPA engineer Rey Manuel clusters Japanese sensibilities by combining oriental screen elements such as shoji-timed aluminum cladding and beige stairs for his dream home's facade.

Friends and relatives who've seen Rey and Vicky Manuel's new place liken it to a 'bit of Tagaytay in Cubao'

Text by Alex Y. Vergara
Photos by Chito Nuñez

IT TOOK CIVIL engineer Rey Manuel and his wife Vicky, a neurologist at St. Luke's Medical Center, 14 years before realizing their dream of moving into a house they could finally call their own. Their new dwelling is a three-story neo-Japanese affair along the fringes of the newly revamped Araneta Center in Cubao, Quezon City.

The Manuels, together with kids Gian, Yuan and Gisella, made the big move barely a month ago, but Vicky has already lost track of the number of times they've hosted parties and sleepovers. The third-floor master's bedroom and guest is quite understandable, as the family used to live in a cramped, two-bedroom duplex owned by Rey's parents in nearby Project 4.

"The kids, especially since at first they now have their own rooms," says Vicky. "They never chose the color of their bedroom walls. And for the first time in our married lives, we [and] now have ample space for a garden, kitchen and my very own walk-in closet!"

The Tex-like garden designed by landscape artists Monica Salcedo and Neri Lihardo even features a melding stairand-concrete wall treatment that morphs into a black pond, which they plan to turn into a koi sanctuary. Potted gardens with smaller rock formations, slate walls and native textures surround the entire house.

"I can't wait for the grass and hedges to get more lush," says Vicky, who, apart from playing several sets of badminton with her family during weekends, finds that snail-paced relaxation while basking in her garden. And she made sure that the landlord's mood rubbish to her home.

"When my interior designer first asked me what I expected from a home, I told him I wanted it to be my sanctuary, a place where I could get away from it all, relax and simply let things be," says Vicky. "Being a one-stoplight is very stressful, but every time I come home, I can't help but sigh with relief."

When it came to the design process, Vicky pretty much allowed Rey to do as he pleased. Rey, who hails his own company called Topmodels Construction (antonio98@yahoo.com), in turn, collaborated with interior designer Raquel Icasiano, who designed, among other items, a number of trundle and floating beds as well as custom-built sofas, ottomans and cabinets.

Cold and warm elements

The Manuels took inspiration from houses they saw in Japan while on a holiday three seven[illegible] ago. The explains they've purchased for combining cold and warm elements such as silver-tinted aluminum cladding and beige cherry that now make up the house's facade.

And since Vicky insisted on a spacious garden, Rey, leaving only a third of the entire space for the house itself, Rey had to shrink his to build spacious[illegible] a secret only Architect can pleased the structure's Japanese flavor.

"The lot is only 300 sq m," says Rey. "Since I was left with only 100 sq m to build a house on, I decided to channel what I saw in Japan."

Apart from the juxtaposition of steel and concrete, the neutral-colored exterior teems with huge glass windows and sliding doors that give the entire structure an ultra-modern

WATERMELON-COLORED walls are an ideal contrast to the kamagong bed and tile floor in the master bedroom.

IN LIEU of an indoor breakfast nook, a semi-outdoor patio beside the kitchen serves as casual dining area for the Manuels.

Neo-Japanese *sanctuary*

THE FORMAL dining area is bathed in afternoon sunlight.

From page 11

And Roman shades and curtains in various sizes temper the sun's glare without considerably blocking off natural light inside the house.

Bay and his collaborators opted for warmer-looking interiors via such touches as orange-toned tiles, brocade upholstery, bold impressionistic paintings and abundant use of hardwood such as narra and kamagong.

Salvageable pieces

Before environmentalists start aiming a rocket, Bay was conscientious enough to remove wood from old houses, including the one that used to stand on the family's Cubao property. In other words, no new trees were harmed in the making of this new structure.

"The ice came with an old, two-story house that was still livable," Moby explains. "Unfortunately, it had to go because it was a bit small for us."

Indeed, apart from making provisions for a master bedroom and the three children's bedrooms, Bay also had to make room for an office-cum-guest room, family room and third-floor terrace that doubles as a party area. He had no choice but to tear down the old structure, which, incidentally also had a floor area of only 300 sq m, and build a new one in its place.

Luckily, on a trip to Isabela, he chanced upon an old wooden house that was about to be torn down. He lost no time in buying the entire structure and later had it transported in its demolished state to Manila.

"When I was finished going through all the manabic parts," says Bay, "I was delighted to find out that my efforts yielded a considerable amount of hardwood, particularly narra, that could be used for the floor."

He then combined his finds with salvageable elements taken from the demolished

ONE of several pocket gardens features a sculptural bamboo.

WALL fountain in linear complex runs o'clock pond.

THE HOUSE, sitting on a 300-sq-m lot, is surrounded by several contiguous lots such as the one above.

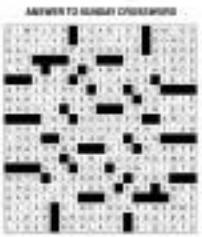
L-SHAPED sofa and pin lights make for a modern and minimalist living room.

ELDEST son Glen, 8 and Lo Sabina, eight, for grown-ups for the third-floor bedrooms.

YOUNGEST child Gisela goes for bubble-gum pink interiors with matching Paul Smith-inspired Roman shades.

VICKY Manuel, apart from tending to her garden, loves to cook in the family's new and spacious kitchen.

ANSWER TO SUNDAY CROSSWORD



MIDDLE child Vinci's bedroom is cool and blue.

Cubao attractive. Also, to his chagrin, Bay hasn't learned that he wouldn't have enough narra planks after all for his project.

"I was all set to look for substitutional sources of narra until Rupert came up with an inspired idea," says Bay "At first, I thought it wouldn't work. Well, to my surprise, it did!"

Instead of going for an all-narra floor, Arcelia convinced the Manuels to combine the material with the darker-colored kamagong. Thus, aside from the steps leading to the upper levels, the house's wooden floors are made up of alternating planks of light and medium kamagong.

Friends and relatives who've seen their new place like it is a "bit of Tagaytay in Cubao," and rightly so. For who would have thought that the area's pestilential ended within the sprawling Araneta complex?

It turns out, one just has to look hard enough to find unexpected pockets of beauty, tranquility and privacy hidden amid the paved chaos of a once lush and quiet district.

STEPS are alternately light-colored narra and dark kamagong.

BIRD marble tombstones inside the San Agustin crypt

CASA Manila guests Vincenzo Bolino, Dennis and Tyrone Valdez, visiting foreigner Ted, Sea Princess, Carlos Celdran, Mari de Leon, Ed Majarucon, Kris Majarucon and Angelo Dimello

GUARDIA Civil at Casa Manila

Sashaying through history

SAN Agustin Church's façade with storyteller Carlos Celdran

PAGODINHA and Child soldier by Angelo Dimello

SAN Agustin Museum director Father Gabriel

EX-PRIMERO talents a break

AN EYE-POPPING BALL OF ERROR! beam brightly from the historic, centuries-old Walled City of Intramuros. Zeroing in closer, the passionate vigor can be found within the colored stone facades of the Philippines, the San Agustin Church. Enter the church and the source is revealed. It's an iconic T-shirt, tour guide-cum-performance artist Carlos Celdran.

Carlos brings home to his various walking tours of Intramuros, but even more important is the immense pride he exudes about Filipino heritage and culture. Dressed in ordered vintage army-inherited with several hats, flags and a large bag containing his magical props ranging from a Chinese porcelain plate to a tape recorder, Carlos cleverly storyteller of histories long past.

One drizzly, lazy Sunday, my aunt Mary de Leon organized a group to attend "A Three Walls Could Talk!." Carlos' version of a walk down Intramuros' memory lane. I had had countless invitations to listen to Carlos, so the opportunity was not to be missed. Along for the ride was my husband Bernie and our 12-year-old Tyrone, who seems to be pried off his computer table to come.

The expression began with everyone singing "Lupang Hinirang," our national anthem. Then started out to be Lesson One: I'd always thought the title was "Bayang Magiliw?" I knew then that I was going to gain a wealth of things today as I could be smarter than a fifth grader.

Between Carlos' Spanish lisp but not so feathered flourish, our group must have stunned all the other sightseers, including Fr Pedro Galende, the director of the San Agustin Museum. Like a dose of fresh oxygen descended on this music. Gone for hyperspace, good yet precisely delivered history in a definite quest for beginners in Pinoy basics.

His enlightening eloquence on Philippine art, culture and society, from pre-Hispanic Manila until the present was delightful. Even those who called themselves of the past and connected them to today's eccentric, Tokyo-esque society.

I particularly connected with his "Commentary" Issue Blend, who it seems not sure just about my height (Hmm. Maybe that's why he always swear a bit about 5 years him) or something. Wait, Carlos said I have to comment!

Carlos explained that the advent of the Americans and their colonies-rich culture started the Filipino growth spurt. Watt Tyrone. I'm not taking any chances and am supplementing his talk with their parents' histories. Therefore it was great to see that Tyrone was really enjoying the tour—kids' these days think they can find everything on YouTube and Friendster doesn't a real world to feel and touch.

As we strolled our way up Intramuros, Carlos narrated from the Spanish's old love Mile to the Americans for $20 million in a "hey-sus, take four" deal, including Cuba and their other colonies. I may also assumed that Dennis knew all the factoids. He can be an insanely rich fan. "What is the Treaty of Paris?" outside. Meanwhile, I must've been asleep in Botany class.

The crowd hit "400 years in a canvas followed by 50 in Hollywood!" episode of our history doesn't do justice to the country features of other countries to ours, of course. Thank goodness Carlos is there to tell us more.

A guided tour by Carlos Celdran through the Walled City is an entertaining, instructive experience

Tessa!

Tessa Prieto-Valdes

English-speaking

How I understand why we're the call center capital of the world! We're also the fourth largest English-speaking nation in the world, with the word-dexterity so brilliantly illustrated by Carlos, to be any account from Kuya in New York.

Like a cute man play divided into several acts, Carlos moved our group through the different parts of the church, playing "Moonlight Serenade" as some other appropriate tune on his cassette player, which in itself is sort of a historic piece of equipment, no?

As it was a weekend, the main church was a non-stop cacophony of wedding songs, so customary after ceremony went on. Carlos said there is a two-year waitlist to get married in San Agustin on a weekend. If a bride "misses work," he smugglishly noted while rubbing his tummy, she has to wait like eight or so Mondays.

War-torn

Looking closely the church's marble floors, one can notice that a large part is made up of tombstones. Carlos explained how the Second World War wiped out Manila's capitol and, sorry to be reminded to welcome glory.

In February 1946 alone, it seems 120,000 people perished as the Americans bombed the city and the Japanese went in to a lover's rage and slaughtered all they could. He paused and said a prayer right in a room where 111 priests were killed. Our city was the second most devastated city during WWII. After the history art, we were liberated as Carlos went back to a lighter mood, donning sunglasses and a pipe to become General Douglas "I shall return" MacArthur himself.

The last part of our tour was across the cobblestone street at the Casa Manila, where we viewed a typical ilustrado house painstakingly restored by Imelda Marcos. As I walked the old world Room, I felt an overwhelming sense of pride. Carlos had imparted a better understanding of our halo-halo heritage and our knotty colonized, progeny culture.

Carlos is great theater, whether for the unlicensing tourists, the bored schoolboys or the intrigued locals. E-mail him at celdrancarlos@hotmail.com, or check his blog at celdransweb.blogspot.com or just call him at (0920) 9082025.

INTERESTING history became right where the action was!

TOUR guide Carlos Celdran walks down the hallway

RESIDENT artist inside Casa Manila

At CEU

Of course, Manila has not lost its soul at all. I could feel it amidst the popularity student body of Centro Escolar University, one of the city's century-old establishments, as I walked through its hallowed halls.

On invitation of fellow "Celebrity Dare" contestant Frederick Peralta, I was a panel judge at the Search for Mr. & Ms. CEU Centennial. The full-scale pageant was complete with swimwear, evening gown and interview segments, where we had the chance to hear contestants expound on their "world peace" answers. All that admiration needed for the rich heritage and historical inheritance of the school.

Being surrounded by all the young students and the hallowed halls of CEU made me think of our resilience as a people. You can break our country but we will always find a way to thrive. That's as true today as it was so many years ago!

E-mail the author at inquirer@inquirer.com.ph.

EX-PERT tour guide Carlos talks about Old Manila

WINNER of Mr. CEU Centennial Kendrick Nigel Tee (left) during the swimwear portion

CEU dance troupe performs at the pageant

MILLARÉ winner and 1st runner-up of the Mr & Mr CEU Centennial, Sheldon Sacayan

PANEL of judges (fr. international 2001 Mutya Ellena Calvo, Sea Princess, Frederick Peralta and Ana Theresa Lucero

PRETTY college students of CEU with the Sea Princess

All-day,
all-week savings!
Add this to your cash to enjoy your favorite McDonald's food items for less.
Use it until February 29!
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Sunday LIFESTYLE

THE VENETIAN Macao's baroque-themed mall, complete with blue sky ceilings

City of luck and lucre

Text and photos by Chester Y. Hontiveros

THE RUINS OF ST. PAUL remains Macao's most famous landmark. But as colonial gaming visitors formerly synonymous only to Las Vegas continue to rise in this port city, could this remnant of a burned-down 17th-century Catholic church, along with other 20 or so churches and chapels, now be only symbolic of its religious past?

Even as serious continue to flock to the stone-carved facade—flat and facelifted like from a distance, but a towering baroque image as if pleated on a bright blue canvas on a clear day—you can tell they come only for the requisite souvenir photo.

For its dwindling and touristy allure, faith in these parts appears to have shifted to the materialist kind. The glitter of casinos beckon, they are Macao's new temples of worship.

Pilgrims by occasional piano lessons can be heard paying their respects even from as far off as the last unbeknown region of China. Injustice left behind by the Portuguese colonialists who first settled there in the 16th century, there's no debate that the real scapegoat was Sanzen's Catholic rebuilt opposed to hedonist and other gaudy sister by the landmark. The Venetian Macao is twice the size of the one in Las Vegas, and has the largest gambling space in the world.

Since the 1960s, Macao's multibillion-dollar gaming industry and the resultant tourist spending has largely banked on its reputation as "Asia's Casino," which opened its doors in 1962. Nearly 80% self-shaped Independent called Grand Lisboa is a veritable symbol to the gambling kingpin's status as its regional overlord.

Like an unwrecked palm, it leans huge over the city, circled only in height by the Macau Tower, even as newcomers in the gambling scene pull out all the stops in dazzling penny pincers and high rollers alike.

Everywhere you look, there seems to be a betting table or a slot machine to feed on. In 2002, Macau experienced a windfall when Hong Kong's gaming monopoly license expired, subsequently liberalizing the gaming scene and opening doors for other casino operators, among them the Americans.

A more modern-eared replica of its Nevada counterpart, Wynn Macau opened its doors in late 2006. A major tourist attraction in the joint is a water-and-light show that's choreographed to music, which happens every 15 minutes from noon to midnight by the hotel's entrance. Homers, Budget, Louis Vuitton, Steck, Prada—you name it, Wynn has a shop in front of the taking from that winning hand.

The Venetian itself surpasses even the neo-gambler with its baroque-themed mall and Tower-inspired things complete with ceiling where guests can take gondola rides and get serenaded with songs by their gondoliers. Just like Vegas. Or Venice.

MACAU Tower stands tall and graceful as dusk, right, in this file photo. Inset: A display of the casino's hotel "Vegas Atmosphere" in other parts of the city

It also has a 15,000-seater arena where the match between tennis greats Pete Sampras and Roger Federer was held in February last. (The event will also be the venue of the Macau leg of the British band The Rolling Stones in concert in February.)

Construction boom

On a recent media trip sponsored by Cebu Pacific with the Macau Government Tourism Office, Philippine journalists saw the last few stages of the construction of MGM Grand Macau, as it was being readied for a holiday opening. (The MGM-run resort-casino opened a week before Christmas.)

Casino construction continues to boom as other game properties are scheduled to open their doors in the Cotai Strip, where The Venetian is located. The Cotai (short for Coloane and Taipa, Macao's two main islands) development is separately built, sited after the famous Las Vegas Strip.

According to locals Asian Gaming, an industry magazine, When Macau does reopen 22,000 visitors daily, while The Venetian already up to 60,000. Macau's tourist arrivals reached 22 million for the first 10 months of 2006, 10 percent of Hong Kong's mainland.

The Philippines was in No. 6 tourist source, considering Cebu Pacific's move to Guangzhou to make direct flights available from Manila, the only Philippine carrier to offer the service.

The casino boom also has latest implications to the many Filipinos working overseas employment. The consensus is that the pay is good, and it's not too far from home.

VIEW of The Venetian's main gambling floor from the second-level shopping area

WYNN Macau's Performance Lake, scene of its famous water-and-light show. Above is the Stanley Ho-owned Hotel Lisboa and Grand Lisboa complex

GENTLE 23-year-old George shares visitors at Semenggoh Wildlife Centre.

As its chief minister has said, culture and nature remain basically pure in the Malaysian state of Sarawak

TRADITIONAL Malay bridge of bamboo poles carrying like a huge V

ENGLISH adventurer James Brooke landed at the Muara River and created history by becoming the first White Rajah.

George of the Jungle lives here

TRADITIONAL dress

PEPPER is a major product of Sarawak.

OLD Malay antique instruments

Text and photos by Linda B. Ballole

PUBIN BIN MIRIP, TAN MAHMUD said, "Sometimes when you set off for home, I wish you could promote and develop a much purer form of culture than the capitals."

He should know as chief minister of Sarawak, Malaysia's largest state, he provides over an area that seems little changed from the time when the White Rajahs—wealthy British adventurer James Brooke, who became governor, and his descendants—ruled.

Though a major trading port from the time it was under the control of the sultan of Brunei, Sarawak does not have the trappings of a major commercial hub.

In the capital city of Kuching, for instance, despite a mushrooming of luxury hotels, it's remains relatively laid-back, as calm and as crowded as it must have been many years back.

While there are shops selling international brands, Kuching does not have the mall-to-mall malls that make major cities throughout the world indistinguishable from each other.

With wide, open spaces to build on, skyscrapers are still unknown, giving visitors an unobstructed view from almost all angles of the city's natural attractions.

Unless one is an inveterate consumer of designer products, the must-visit shopping destination in Kuching is the main bazaar, a slightly curved row of old, fashioned two-story shops on one of the capital's oldest streets dating back to 1864.

Stores survey local handicrafts and food products like sago cookies and pepper, as well as antiques. Visitors can get antique Chinese jewelry boxes and cosmetics cases, traditional housewares, pottery, ceramics, tribal arts and many more.

Kuching is a city for walking. Though the proximity of a tropical forest makes adventure a daily possibility, most tourist attractions can be reached on foot that there is hardly any need to take a taxi or a bus.

One can also get in and out of the city by motor vehicle in a matter of minutes, as traffic jams are a rarity.

KUCHING, Malay for "cats," has paid tribute to the namesake feline by building monuments in its honor.

Two sides

The Sarawak River effectively divides the city into the north and south sections, with each side having its own mood. A short ride on a sampan is the most convenient way to get to either side.

One side sports the more traditional look with its Malay kampung (village) against a mountainous background, mosque, and residents of the six of the Malaysian federation. The other side has the more modern architecture of hotels and stores.

It is not certain how the capital got its name, Kuching. Malay word for cat. Some say it was the result of people misinterpreting the Chinese word pa chin, which means "beach." Others say the name was derived from a lychee like fruit called kuchi (kuching kuch's evil).

However it was named, Kuching reflects its affinity with the felines. Its iconic spots of the city are elaborate monuments to the house pet. Even more impressive, the city has the world's only museum dedicated to cats.

Outside the capital, about an hour away by car, guests get to see the state's before and after in the Sarawak Cultural Village that features traditional long and tall houses, age-old traditionals, indigenous arts, crafts and delicacies; and a sampling of folk dances and music.

If Sarawak restores a past, as Mahmud says, the environment also looks as natural as it has been centuries past. The state may have had its setbacks of environmental crises in the past but now, pushing eco-tourism as a major industry, efforts have been made to preserve and preserve the still sizeable natural resources.

Meeting 'relatives'

At the Semenggoh Wildlife Center, about half an hour away from Kuching, a visitor gets a chance to make the acquaintance of the orangutan, one of the creatures, the reddish brown haired orangutan during their feeding hours mid-morning and mid-afternoon.

A platform at the center's reception area, where newer orangutans come to feed, is separated only by a rope, giving visitors a close-up view of the large apes.

One of the chances a visitor is likely to meet is the true George of the Jungle, an adult male orangutan named after his caregivers who has trained.

Guests can watch, though at a longer distance, wildlife apes by wedding several hundred meters to a viewing deck inside the bush-tropical forest.

At the Bako National Park, the state's oldest, visitors will be rewarded by the sight of one of the rarest and shyest primates, the long nosed proboscis monkeys. The park also hosts macaques and various other animals.

Sarawak may not be exactly a place that time forgot but, for travelers who have had enough of the glass and concrete layout of the urban jungle, it offers a very pleasant and welcome change.

COLORFUL traditional parking building stands out among old stores.

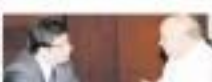
VISITOR tries a newly made flute in Sarawak Cultural Village.

Singapore-Moscow flights go daily

SINGAPORE AIRLINES (SIA) has increased frequency on the Singapore-Moscow route to daily starting March 30. The existing three-times-weekly service via Dubai will be complemented with a four-times-weekly non-stop service (which will continue once it reaches the United States of America). "We are delighted that our market has been building steadily on the Moscow route. We are finding there is real interest and attraction in Singapore, as well as other onward destinations—especially Bali and Australia—among Russian holidaymakers and business travellers," said Singapore Airlines executive vice president for marketing and regions, Huang Cheng Eng. "Our new service to Mumbai, Seoul, will allow us to step up frequency to 11 times-a-week operation. It will provide Singapore Airlines connections between Moscow and these other cities. Medellin, Dubai and, of course, Singapore," Huang said.

The new, non-stop, flights will be operated by a Boeing 777-300ER, fitted with Singapore Airlines new generation cabin products across all three classes. The

DOT and Dominican Republic meet on tourism linkages



The Department of Tourism (DOT) and the Embassy of the Dominican Republic recently conducted a bilateral meeting on possible tourism promotional activities and cultural exchanges between the two countries. The discussion included initial concepts on attracting travelers and investors to visit the Philippines, as well as updates on the tourism industries here and in the Dominican Republic.

Photo shows (from left) Dominican Republic Ambassador to India , Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia and the Philippines Hans Dannenberg Castellanos and DOT Undersecretary for Tourism Planning and Promotions Eduardo Jacapa Jr.

Travel Briefs

$777-300ER includes the world's most spacious Business Class, at a 1-2-1 configuration with fully flat beds. Singapore Airlines began flights to Moscow's Domodedovo Airport in March 2006, with a three-times-weekly service via Dubai. The flight will continue to operate from Singapore on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. The new non-stop flight will operate every Sunday.

Thursday, Saturday and Sunday, with a morning departure and afternoon arrival into Moscow. The return journey will operate via Dubai from Moscow on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, while the non-stop flight will depart in the late evening on the other days, arriving into Singapore late the following morning. Singapore Airlines and SilkAir flights from Manila, Cebu and Davao conveniently connects same day to/from these Moscow services.

For flight bookings and other information, call 7888899 (Manila), 3230211 (Cebu), or 2046888 (Davao) or log on to www.singaporeair.com.

Asiana Airlines begins Paris flights

SEOUL: FIVE-STAR AIRLINES are now looking for the second consecutive year. Asiana Airlines (OZ) has announced that it will begin its Paris flights by March 31. Travelers spending their summer vacations in Europe can now book Asiana Airlines for three gateway destinations: Paris, London and Frankfurt.

Asiana will fly from its main hub in Incheon International Airport to Charles de Gaulle Airport on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays every week. The new destination comes after attendant aviations agreement between Korea and France last year.

Asiana will be only the second airline in 24 years to fly the Incheon-Paris route. In turn, France and delegates an airline of any European Union member country to service the same route.

Asiana will be using the spacious Boeing 777 which comfortably seats over 300 passengers in first class, business class and travel class.

Meantime, the annual World Airline Star Ranking from Skytrax recently upheld Asiana's five-star ranking on the basis of their airport and cabin services. More than 300 airlines worldwide were

ranked on their quality performance by Skytrax.

The full report appears on the website of the London-based aviation industry research organization.

Aside from Asiana, only five other airlines earned a five-star rating. Singapore Airlines, Cathay Pacific Airways, Qatar Airways, Malaysia Airlines and Kingfisher Airlines Limited.

In the year's quality standards study, Asiana particularly excelled in the categories of Business Class and Economy Class for long haul routes, as well as in staff grooming and for assisting family and children.

GONDOLA ride through The Venetian's canals

GUZHUI temple on Taipa Island

ST. FRANCIS Xavier Chapel in Coloane Village, built in 1928 to replace a cob-house of the same, who died 56 miles off Macau's coast in 1552, and who married Christian

VIEW of the city from Macau Tower's 58th-floor observation deck

City of luck and lucre

SENADO Square, the historic city center, where much of Macau's retail activity takes place

From page C6

such first Filipinos can be found among the service staff everywhere from restaurants to hotels to the betting tables.

Amid the allure of ancient fortune from gaming, Macau continues to be upbeat about promoting its historic center, inscribed in Unesco's World Heritage list, showcasing its unique East-Oriental ambience and architecture. The city was returned to Chinese rule in 1999, and it's special administrative region like Hong Kong, enjoying semi-autonomy from the mainland.

Flying downward

Alternative entertainment for daredevils of a different kind is offered at the Macau Tower, one of the world's tallest. On the 61st floor, at 223 meters above ground, tourists can take a dive on the Bungy, or the so-called Skyjump, which simulates Bungy-flying downward, that is, as one plummets from the 61st floor to the ground in mere 20 seconds.

The Skyjump is the world's highest and the first in Asia. There's also the SkyWalk X, a rather intimidating bar in fact a grueling stroll around the outer rim of the 61st floor—without handrails and the Hour Glass, where the Tower's geek is open to daredevil.

A pilgrimage of the 17th-century churches and similarly remains quite popular among Filipino visitors, according to the MOTO marketing representatives in the Philippines.

Macau, which is home predominantly to Buddhism and Taoism, is estimated to have 20,000 Catholics. (Total population of the region is about 5 million.) A recent article in the International Herald Tribune, however, placed it below that figure, noting the drop-dollars of pilgrims to Catholics among the Macanese. (Catholicism in China started in Macau, before it made the inroad into Beijing.)

A Portuguese priest interviewed for the same article blamed this on the growing "materialist 'hell,' wrought by the new goods-luck lifestyle. He lamented how the church's hard lord have been forgotten.

For sure, perhaps. But wait when the chips go down...

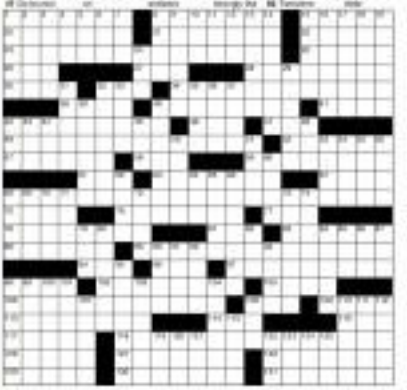
Cebu Pacific flies directly to Macau from Manila Sundays, Thursdays and Saturdays. For bookings, visit www.cebupacificair.com or call 7820888. For more information on Macau tourism, visit www.macautourism.gov.mo or e-mail mpta@ipim.com.pl or call 8132885.

LOOK, Ma, an inside! Macau Tower's SkyWalk X, its long-board diners all an unforgettable photo of actress Charlize Theron, who also walked the outer rim of the tower's 61st floor.

SUNDAY CROSSWORD

PREMIER CROSSWORD By Frank A. Longo

PELINES



Answers on page C3

CloseUp Gives Away 100 Diamonds at Lovapalooza Frost Fest!

A shower of sparkles awaits 100 lucky couples at this years' Lovapalooza '08, the most awaited annual Valentine's Day event. Cocksome twosomes will ice cool kisses will receive a diamond-studded Crystal Frost necklace at the Lovapalooza '08 Frost Fest - the most-attended and coolest Valentine's bash of the year, graced by celebs, fashionistas and partyphiles.

You too can join this exclusive and glitzy Heart's Day celebration. Just send a photo of you and your honey's best icy cool kiss to Closeup@lovapalooza.ph or to 100 Pasig Blvd, Pasig City. 100 lucky couples will be chosen get to attend the exclusive Lovapalooza Frost Fest Party and will be given the best Valentine's gift: a diamond-studded Crystal Frost necklace! CloseUp Lovapalooza Frost Fest will be the ultimate Valentines event - featuring ice bars, overflowing drinks and cool entertainment for a night of love and partying only for couples with icy cool kisses!

CloseUp Lovapalooza, a Valentine's tradition in the Philippines since 2004, has brought couples together with a kiss. This year, CloseUp Lovapalooza brings out fresher and cooler kisses with CloseUp's new Crystal Frost variant. It has crystal frost granules that scrubs as it releases icy cool freshness, giving you icy cool kisses! Join CloseUp Lovapalooza '08 now and get a chance to win one of 100 diamonds and be one of the first to experience icy cool kisses! Deadline of submission of entries is until February 6. Have an icy-cool Valentines!

ROOTS AND WINGS
Cathy Bolso-Gobelli

Preparing for prom season

IF THERE ARE TWEEN OR TEEN girls in your family, you probably have a prom in your future.

In two events, my daughter will be going to her very first prom. You can imagine how excited and nonplussed we have become over our little girl's "coming out."

How swiftly time has flown. From the three word questions like our dress is a commercial journey. Decades ago, on my own prom night, my date was dropped off at our house and we both (she's now my husband) had to sign in and drive in now, and if you think my parents were strict, get this, my date's curfew was earlier than mine!

This was in the early '80s, way before the cellular age. By 11 p.m. I was home watching in his mind as we decided to go. We arrived at his house on the stroke of midnight. His Colombian mother, in her silk robe, with hands folded across her chest, was there, seeming to be waiting at the gate.

A responsible parent needs to hold the young lady or young man about the potential dangers that lurk on prom night.

With all the preparation and expense that go into it, prom night should ideally be an evening to remember. I was both amused and comforted by the rules and regulations set forth by the prom parent committee in my daughter's school.

• Attires, along with their dates, are required to be prompt and in the ballroom premises at all times.

• Loitering in the lobby of the hotel is not allowed.

• Smoking and drinking are strictly prohibited.

• No "checking in" the hotel is prompt if room occupied by parents.

• Parents will be limited to a certain area of the ballroom to prevent their daughters from being uncomfortable in the prom.

After-event activities

I am glad that the prom committee took time to draft this article. However, it is in the after-prom activities where tension move to other places that they can get heated, and this is where the danger begins.

In the United States, there is a noteworthy program called Impaired Prom which advocates for making responsible choices on prom night—or on any night, for that matter.

"It's about acknowledging the night those, because smart decisions cannot always the reason, or even the most obvious," the website www.thatsmybabyprom.com says.

The site stresses the fact that when alcohol and other drugs enter the picture, it can be dangerous—even deadly. In fact, according to a 2000 National High School Traffic Safety Administration report, nearly half (46 percent) of all fatal car crashes on typical prom weekends in 2000 involved alcohol.

However, it isn't just the potential car accidents that a parent and mom need to worry about. Statistically, studies show that a large percentage of mixed sexual activity takes place on prom night itself. Although these statistics are US-based, they are pretty much relevant to our culture as well.

• Twenty-five percent of high-school students said they were under the influence of alcohol or drugs when they last engaged in sexual activity (Office of National Drug Control Policy).

• Seventy-five percent had used alcohol or drugs the last time they had sex (NIDA, 2004).

• Alcohol or drugs influenced 29 percent of 18 to 17-year-olds and 37 percent of 18 to 24-year-olds to engage in sexual activity (Henry J. Kaiser Foundation, 2000).

Safe, beautiful memory

What can parents and tweens do to ensure their proms might become a safe and beautiful memory worth keeping and not regretting? Here are some suggestions:

1. Make sure there is a responsible, non-drinking adult looking back, even if my date was still a minor, perhaps there was great wisdom in my parents letting me use the family car rather than that of my date. Remind your teen or daughter they should never ride with someone who's been drinking.

2. Back it up at all times.

3. Make sure you are aware of your daughter's or son's plans for the evening. Ask either go to offer places after the prom or is going? Ask your child where he or she will be and set a reasonable curfew. Have them send you a text message at a certain time to advise you of their whereabouts. Depending on what your values are, you can gently help your child choose a safe and decent place to go to after the prom.

4. When planning a date, remind your child that looks aren't everything. Instead of the usual desirable traits young people look for in prom dates are a basis for good conversation and a sense of humor. It is important that your child trusts his/her date—someone who plans to be safe, just like he/she is.

Ideally, there should be a time for you to meet your child's date prior to the event. Maybe invite him to your home or a casual dinner at a restaurant. Or you can get to know him before the night is over.

5. Take lots of photographs but don't embarrass your child. From sights are great memory builders, but don't overdo it.

6. If you're the worry from the prom venue, you may opt to stay at a hotel close by and make it an night to finish event. Just be discreet and don't loiter around the venue. Have dinner or watch a movie close by while your child is in the prom.

7. Remind your child to keep his or her with about at all times. Be in charge of keeping in control will make you pitch-perfect.

A prom can be a memorable event in a young person's life. It begins with the evening to date movie to and having close, safe fun on the night itself. I remember my prom night as a wonderful memory in spite of my date's early curfew. My mother's discipline eventually paid off. He graduated with top honors from college and went on to pursue graduate studies in Physics.

Until I heard, Cinderella Miss a prom a surprise at SAKA. Here's that for a memory worth keeping?

Email the author at cathybellow@gmail.com

CEBU CEBU
Jaime Picornell

Chain is stronger at 14

MICHEL and Amparo Lhuillier

CEBU countries Amy Sayoko and Tessie Mendoza-Lim

JOSEPHINE and Fred Buenaventura

THE CEBU CHAPTER OF LA Chaine des Rotisseurs celebrated its 14th anniversary with what was dubbed as "a feast of flavors, melodies and traditions of elegance" at the grand ballroom of the Shangri-La Mactan, Cebu Resort.

Welcoming everyone into the formidable room of blanket and magnetic chandeliers she is La Chaine's head of the entire Philippines, the priestess over the Cebu chapter.

Even for the occasion were Josephine and Fred Buenaventura, the priestess over La Chaine in Manila but headquarters in Cebu. The Buenaventuras mainly call Iloilo as its hostage home encircled by acres of pastures.

Michel was in usual effervescent self. Amparo, too. She looked stunning in plum clothes and a queen's crown of diamonds, rubies and emeralds. "The black gowns," she decreed and suggested that ladies come in jewel colors. They complied.

Marco Pronesti, general manager of the Waterfront Hotel, planned the evening to the last detail. More than 130 signed up and Marco thought of having a single song tribute to accommodate everyone.

With the clever use of miles of white cloth and showcase devices, he made the ballroom a virtual reproduction of the Hall of Mirrors at the palace of Versailles.

"It reminds me of something Jimmy Mitchell wrote about it Louis XIV was to 'Versailles,' someone gasped near me. "In what way?" I asked. She said it was like being in Aladdin's cave.

Picture the setting we were in with flickering tapers in silver candelabras, shining chandeliers overhead, gleaming porcelain, and stylized pearls from by most of the ladies present.

The reluctant Board Code, Joy Abraham, with wife Carol, were in impeccable outfits from the master Kenda in southern India. Shangri-La Mactan's GM, Tim Wright, wore a Scottish kilt in his clan's plaids. Yvonne Montemayor was a surround in burgundy satin. Costume Art Darwin Jovalde her collected their prizes.

The Mario Polo Pharis-IBM, Hans Franz, and his lovely wife Ro were right across from me, lively and tasty in ever. From Switzerland came Monsieur and mayor Meyerhofer.

Throughout the night, Imperial Tchaikovsky music filled the air. Limited pages served an exquisite menu and poured carefully selected wines. The delicious salmon tartare with Sybaton Penny Royalty Fusion 2005 was served with the second cooking and the Wolfe of Bordeaux.

Spy Valley Pinot Noir 2004 accompanied the braised duck confit, which was followed by a champagne sorbet in the Wolfe of the Heavens marked through the sealed system. A rich 3rd Chateau Tour du Moulin Carnet particulars was perfect with the slow-roasted US tenderloin and chokka fillets.

Heart or Chocolate Beat happy cut came with the assortment of desserts, and was poured for the last of the evening. Many passed up on the customary brandy and just concentrated on the bubbly. Midnight came but no one turned into a pumpkin. Hers could anyone, with all this conviviality and laughter?

The month of March will be an important one for La Chaine des Rotisseurs in the Philippines, the international chapter will be held for two days in Manila, followed by another two in Cebu.

On March 11 there will be a huge welcome party at the Cebu Provincial capitol generously lent by Gov. Gwendolen Garcia. Next evening there will be a grand Filipiniana event at the splendid banquet, scene of the recent banquet a year ago, of the Shangri-La's Mactan Island Resort. La Chaine members in Cebu are beginning to sign up for both events.

TIM Wright with Bo and Hans Hunt

CAROL and Ray Abraham

UP AIESEC marks 40th year

AIESEC UNIVERSITY OF the Philippines Diliman, the pioneer local committee of the world's largest student-run organization, is celebrating its 40th anniversary this February.

To commemorate this, the organization will be holding three events.

Fundraisers, scheduled at the UP Academic Oval on Feb. 14, a fun-run for people who routinely run to the next supermarket on the activity or let the dozen to be physically fit. No special skills or facilities are required.

Dejavu: Like You've Never Seen Before will be held at Abelardo Hall, Gravahill on Feb. 16. It is a tribute to the years' fashion hit skits, drinking and dancing—excepting troubles just for the night. Wednesday going to be a party to remember.

Aiesec Fortified: Grand Alumni Homecoming will be happening March 1 at the Greenhills West Clubhouse, San Juan. Open to current and previous directors, the homecoming promises to reconnect Aiesec brothers, re-ignite which Aiesec vibe and rekindle old Aiesec relationships.

Celebration begins at 7 p.m. Tickets are available for only P1,000 exclusive of buffet dinner, free flowing alcoholic drinks and betting apps, performances by Aiesec UPD graduate DJ61 Hernandez and many more!

For inquiries and ticket purchases, visit www.aiesec.ph, only AIESEC UPD Diliman-running or contact Jona Pleyadan at (0927)297-9289.

Photo organizer

ORGANIZE AND PROTECT your treasured photographs in these separate albums in-sided into three categories. They come bold baby-pastel hues from first to three years or. If there are three kids in the family, each can have one album. Photos you like for organized according to occasions...Important, birthday pa-

All three albums can be viewed in one organizer. Each album holds 40 pieces of 4R pictures, or a total of 160 pictures. Items included are Barbie, Princess, and Pooh. The albums are available at Station-al Book Store, Landmark, Rustan's Department Stores, Fully Booked and other stores.

Reusable shopping bag

NATIONAL BOOK STORE (NBS) has launched its eco-friendly shopping bag.

The Red Thriller Tarifi's Destructive bag is NBS' response to the challenge of reducing solid waste by limiting the use of plastic bags in retail stores.

The country's largest bookstore chain recognizes its role in the proliferation of non-biodegradable echoes. It wants to contribute to the effort to reverse the harmful practice.

The red mesh tote is sturdy and can handle moderate to heavy purchases. Roomy, durable, and washable, it is ideal for office and school supplies shopping.

NBS shoppers can get the Red Bag for a minimum purchase of P1,000 or buy it for P65 only. They get 50 centavos off purchases every time they shop at the store with the Red bag. Stocks are limited.

Scholarships for top high-school graduating students

THE UNITED WORLD COLLEGES (UWC) Philippine National Committee, chaired by Cesar Sison, announces the availability of four scholarships for years 2008-2010.

Filipino high school graduating students (not older than 17 years old by September) in the top ten percent of their class may apply for a full-tuition scholarship to the Lester Pearson UWC of the Pacific in Canada and the UWC of the Atlantic in Wales, United Kingdom.

Students with an aptitude for physics are also invited to apply for a scholarship to the UWC of the Adriatic in Italy.

Gifted young musicians (not over 17 years old by September) with a strong background in classical music and professional music may apply for a full-tuition scholarship to the Adelaide College. They must be proficient in piano, violin, viola, or cello.

UWC (International) students follow the two-year international baccalaureate program. Of equal importance are community service programs that allow teenagers to work with one another.

Scholarships cover tuition fees, board, lodging, and health insurance.

Completed forms must be received by March 14, 5 p.m. by e-mail, fax, mail, or delivery to 63 East Main Drive, Philamlife Homes, Quezon City. Application forms may be downloaded from the web site (www.pk.uwc.org) or requested by e-mail (info@pk.uwc.org) or fax (6352294).

BORROMEO-ESTURAS

Alexander Echevarrieta, son of Angel and Pura Borromeo of San Vicente, San Jose, Camarines Sur, exchanged vows recently with Pontevedra native Maria O. Esturas, daughter of Justo (deceased) and Merlin Esturas of Batong, San Jose, Camarines Sur, at St. Jude Thaddeus Parish Church, Naga City. Rev. Fr. Allan Rap Reyna and Fr. Ben Nuñez officiated. The reception was held at Champagne Garden, Mayon Avenue, Naga City.

LEYTE-FINEZA

Carlos Oliver Leyte, son of Thelma Leyte, tied the knot recently with Cherryl Pineda, daughter of Edgardo and Consuelo Pineda, at Carmen Palace, Cultural Center of the Philippines Complex, Manila. Pastor Gilbert Monje officiated the ceremony. Reception was also held at Carmen Palace.

Milestones

We welcome announcements of weddings and engagements. Submit names of engaged couple, names of parents, date and place of wedding, and gown designer along with a photo of the couple and a sketch of the bridal gown, if any, to the Features, P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office 1265 Makati City. E-mail to lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph. A photo of the bride and groom is required if the wedding has already taken place. Announcements will be printed depending on space availability and are cut to the stories.

SILOS DEBUT

Isabela Ana Maria "Iya" Silos celebrated her 18th birthday recently with a masquerade ball at the Rockwell Tent. Guests were welcomed by her parents Ramon and Fatima Silos and her brothers Miguel and Anton. Highlight of the evening was the traditional Cotillion featuring the debutante's dream friends. Caterer was Margarita Fores while entertainment was provided by the Manila Philharmonic Orchestra and DJ Maxwell Davis.

MERAFLOR-OCAMPO

Joseph Dennis G. Meraflor, son of Dominga and Leticia Meraflor, wed recently Mary Ann M. de Ocampo, daughter of Orlando and Crispina de Ocampo, at St. Demetrius Chapel, Ilaya Park, Manila. Reception was held at Inner Courtyard, Intramuros, Manila. Josel Nonoy designed the bridal gown.

VILLANUEVA-REGOR

Paulo M. Villanueva, son of Reminardo and Teodora Villanueva, and Kristina Michelle Rigor, daughter of Danilo and Mevinia Rigor, were married recently at Mt. Carmel Church in Alta Vista Subdivision, Subang, Bulacan.

URETA-NAVARRO

Archbishop Fernando Ureta, son of Salvador Maria Ureta and Nora Pastor Fuentabar, and Josel del Rio Navarro, daughter of Julio Malipaig Navarro and Elvira Fuentes del Rio, wed yesterday at San Sebastian Cathedral, Lipa City, Batangas. Reception was held at Montilla Garden, La Finca Resort, Dagmar, Lipa City. The bride wore a gown by Rudy Fuentabar.

PURELY PERSONAL
Josephine Dirveng

Divine Mercy World Congress in Rome

UNDER THE DIRECTION OF POPE Benedict XVI, the Catholic Church will hold the First World Apostolic Congress of the Divine Mercy April 1-6 in Rome.

Special Masses, conferences, testimonies and missionary festivals and shows are scheduled. Daily themes of the program are: The Prophetic Mission of Pope John Paul II regarding Divine Mercy in the Mystery of the Church; Conversion of the Church Stimulated by Mercy and The Role of Mercy in the Church's Mission.

Cardinal Schonborn will preside at the closing celebration of the Eucharist at St. Peter's Square that will include a mercy light procession. Pope Benedict XVI will take up congress conclusions.

The delegation of Filipino Divine Mercy devotees will leave March 30. Most will visit the Holy Land and Egypt or go on a Marian pilgrimage, including Lourdes and Fatima, afterward.

Msgr. Jose Clemente Ignacio, coordinator of the Divine Mercy in Asia and Oceania, will lead pilgrims to be brought by Adam's Travel, (02) 165-1416.

Jubilee Year

On the 150th anniversary of the apparitions of Our Lady of Lourdes in Bernadette, the National Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes on Kaakbay extent Bicutan Taguig, Quezon City, will hold Novena Masses Feb. 2-10, 5:30 p.m.

Each novena Mass will be followed by a candlelight procession. Novena Masses will have different themes. The blessing of the sick will be on Feb. 9, 5 p.m.

On Feb. 11, feast day, High Mass will be held at 12 noon. Theme is "The Church's Mission in the Light of the New Evangelization." Grand procession is at 5 p.m. Fr. Ramon Asunero, OFM Cap., is parish priest.

True Cross

The Monasterio de Tarlac in San José will celebrate the first anniversary of the enshrinement of the Relic of the True Cross of Jesus Jan. 28.

The relic was blessed by then Papal Nuncio Fernando Filoni and enshrined in the Chapel of the Holy Cross in 2007.

Fr. Archie Cortez, founder and superior of the Servants of the Risen Christ, became relic custodian when the diocese of Essen, Germany, bequeathed it to his order. The relic was kept in Essen for a thousand years, but the number of monks taking care of it diminished.

The reliquary where the actual fragment is kept is open to the faithful for public on Sept. 14, feast of the Triumph of the Holy Cross, also the founding date of the Order, and Jan. 28, date of enshrinement.

Healing

Where Fr. Bienvenido Cacho set up the Sanctified Healing Center in Lopez Village, Los Baños, in 2000, it contained only of the chapel.

Temacle Untalt donated the land. The rich came for the healing Masses every Sunday and Friday at 9 a.m. The place now includes a grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes, an Adoration Chapel and a place for retreats.

The chapel is awesome, adorned by life-size statues of St. Anthony of Padua, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Expedito, and an icon of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Miracle healing has taken place there.

On Feb. 18, the community will begin prayers in the grotto at 8:30 a.m. followed by a healing Mass at 9:30 a.m.

On Feb. 11, 8 a. m., Father Caesar will celebrate a healing Mass at the Immaculate Conception Parish, Los Baños.

Pilgrimage

Fr. Roy Rosales, parish priest and rector of the Immaculate Conception Cathedral in Pasig, will lead pilgrims to Medjugorje, Land March 29-April 12. Tour coordinator is Sally Medilaro who brought Father Roy and other pilgrims to the Shrine of the Miraculous Medal to Paris, Lourdes and Santiago de Compostela in 2007. Text 0906-2195106.

Healing Mass

Fr. Emil Member will come down from Baguio, Batanes, to hold healing Masses Feb. 1, 6 a.m., St. Paul of the Cross Parish, Hill Village, Marikina, and Feb. 3, 6 p.m., Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe Parish, Ouan St., NDC Compound, Sta. Mesa.

Wheelchair needed

Danny Benayon, 40, of Dasmi, Bohol, had polio when he was young does he left from the shoulders of their home and broke his back.

Danny needs a wheelchair, even secondhand, to be can work. Text 88 at 0917-6302205.

Relic

Fr. Melvin Castro said the relic of St. Therese of the Child Jesus would be brought Jan. 31 to the diocese of Tarlac. From there, it would be brought Feb. 1 to Mount Carmelo Monastery in Ignacio. Last stop is San Sebastian Cathedral on Feb. 2.

Sta. Misa de Buena Obra

In 2006, when Nita Mercader received the gift of healing at medium of the Sto. Niño, people went to her home on Rafael Palma Street, Cavite City. Through outside hunting happened, Nita decided people should not only be cured physically but spiritually too.

She asked a young sculptor from Paete to carve a life-size statue of the Child Jesus, calling it the Niño de Buena Obra.

She said the image inspired people to teach their children right values and be more church-going. The sculptor, who was then suffering from stomach cancer, got well and is now living in the United States.

In today's 3 p.m. procession, the image will be carried on carroza #93. Some 168 carrozas are participating in the event organized by the Cofradía-cion del Santísimo Nombre del Niño Jesus.

Carroza #51 will carry the Sto. Niño de la Leche owned by Boy Bolor who brought the image from Seville, Spain.

The feast of Our Lady of Candelaria is Feb. 2.

For Spanish lessons, text 0918-2202849.

Tagaytay country fair Feb. 9-10

THE FLOWER FARM IS HOLDing the Country Fair, a mix-of-a-kind outdoor bazaar featuring gift items, art pieces, antiques, jewelry, accessories and food selections from local restaurants, Feb. 9-10 in Tagaytay City.

Among those featured are bags by Le Sidel, hats by Hat Masters, sets and antiques by Angel Wong and Ed Castro, plants by Fetalvenus, candles by Marijo Mesenden, fashion gifts by Ivy Mesenden and martinis from Hopo Inn Pastel, Buffalo and on-the-spot educational demonstrations are also scheduled.

Visitors will get a chance to tour The Flower Farm, including its greenhouses and pocket gardens.

The Flower Farm's Ging delos Reyes said the events was held once or twice a year to allow people to enjoy a totally unique setting where they can relax and learn about nature.

He said it was especially organized for Filipinos looking for something different to do on weekends.

Located in Barrio Guinhawa, The Flower Farm is the Philippines' premier grower of cut flowers, potted plants and herbs.

Entrance tickets to the two-day get-together event are P500 per person (US$1011 and P1000/US).

EMILY'S POST
Emily Marcelo

Long-distance relationship is going nowhere

DEAR EMILY,

I am a 40-year-old seaman. My spouse works with a very stable job. I am financially secure and they say I am an attractive woman.

I have been separated from my husband for almost seven years. I have two daughters and never had a relationship until now, with a 41-year-old married man.

My relationship is long distance, as he is in the United States. We constantly communicate through e-mail and phone calls.

We met once when he came to visit me in my place of work outside the Philippines. We were together for almost a week—and we were both happy about our relationship.

But he made one thing clear, which was that he preferred a no-strings-attached relationship with me.

I accepted and we continued communicating. We plan to see each other in the Philippines once.

As the date approaches, I realize that I am being stupid continuing this relationship. My self-esteem is being affected and I am unhappy. I ask myself why I have to settle for this kind of relationship when I can have a better one.

But I really love this guy!

I decided to write him a letter telling him I wanted our stolen chocolates but we could continue the friendship we had.

We got emotional and said I know what I was getting into with him and, though he was not demonstrative, he felt something for me, too.

I feel miserable.

But I am firm in my decision to end this relationship because it is going nowhere and it is hurting me. I am afraid I will suffer a lot of pain in the process.

Do you think I should end this relationship though I really love him in spite of his age and situation in life?

HEART BROKEN

There are two ways to solve your problem...the easy or the hard way.

Go along with his line of thinking and play the field without feeling guilty about it and see each other whenever the spirit moves you. Continue that long-distance but intense love affair with easy a thought in the world.

That is easy enough, right...no strings, no fuss!

Or you can tell him exactly what you said to me, that you are losing your self-esteem with this arrangement. That a little voice inside you is telling you it is not right because he is married, and it is not fair one bit to you.

You did not wait all this time for that great love to come only to have a casual relationship. And that, kabsi, is the hard way.

The not mistake love for bumper for affection, or loneliness, or every fear. You may think it is love, but it often is not.

Do you honestly think he is the only man who can fly your kite or floss your heart-wires? Did you not know it already when you said "why just is he this kind of relationship when you can have a better one?"

But you just do not have enough faith in yourself.

He found a very willing plaything in you and he is not going to rule out until he considers coins for you at the range.

You should have set the rules before, not in the middle of the game. If he thinks you are great enough and worth throwing his precious life on the social he, then you are lucky.

Otherwise, go ahead with your plan and start taking care of your future without him. Keep listening to that little voice. You will always be miserable without hearing its approval, which should come loud and clear.

E-mail the author at emarcelo@inquirer.com.ph. Subject: Lifestyle, or send your letters to Features, Lop or www.pla.gov.ph and listen to Mr. Marcelo on Love Tips" Thursday, "Tipikasyon," 7:25-8:30 p.m., Monday-Friday, on dzRH 144.7 FM.

SUPER SHOPPING WEEKEND AT SM SUPERMALLS

Clear your schedules and mark February 1, 2 and 3 on your calendars because your most awaited sale event is hitting SM City North Edsa and SM City Sucat! **SM Supermalls' Great 3-Day Sale has come once again!** Shoppers will be treated to great bargains and large discounts of up to 50% off on great selections mallwide.

ENDLESS CHOICES AT SM CITY NORTH EDSA

Hundreds of participating establishments at SM City North Edsa assure you of the widest shopping choices with the most attractive prices. Here, you're sure to find something that each member of your family is sure to enjoy.

SHOPPING SPECIALS AT SM CITY SUCAT

Check out the SM Department Store at Bldg. B and enjoy huge discounts on apparel, shoes and fashion accessories for men, women and kids. Visit SM Hypermarket at Bldg. A, and pick out the freshest produce and grocery items, all attractively priced to fit your weekly grocery budget. Personal care and home appliances are also available at discounted prices.

COMPLETE ENJOYMENT

In between shopping, relax a bit by breaking for refreshments at one of our many restaurants. Grab a snack at one of the food kiosks, sit down for a quick meal at one of the casual dining places or savor a delicious feast at one of the fine dining restaurants. Afterwards, you can complete the family bonding experience by catching the latest movies at the SM Cinemas or by playing with the kids at the Amusement Center.

EXCITING PROMOS, EXCITING PRIZES!

Get a chance to bring home one of three (3) 81cm (32-inch) JVC High Definition TVs. Simply shop at participating establishments and save your receipts. Every P500 receipt will earn you one raffle coupon. Aside from that, you can also get a coupon for every P150 single purchase at the SM Foodcourts, or when you buy four cinema tickets (single purchase) at the SM Cinemas, and for P150 single purchase of tokens at the Amusement Center. Simply present your proof of purchase at the designated redemption center at the store of purchase any time during mall hours within the promo period.

Three (3) TVs each will be given away at SM City North Edsa and SM City Sucat so you'll have better chances of winning. Raffle draw will be on February 3, 2008 at 10:15 pm, so you can submit your coupons until 10:00 pm of the same day.

Make sure to mark these dates and be ready to rush to SM Supermalls to grab the best deals before everyone else!

SUPERMALLS
North Edsa • Sucat

3-Day Sale Mall Hours

SM City North Edsa

Feb. 1 & 2	10am - 11pm
Feb. 3	10am - 10pm

SM City Sucat

Feb. 1 & 3	10am - 10pm
Feb. 2	10am - 11pm

3x the Chances to Win!
Get a chance to win one of three (3)
81cm (32-inch) JVC DynaPix High Definition LCD TVs with every P500 purchase.

JVC BDO

ENTERTAINMENT

DANCING on the Pinoy Pillows Wang's (right) song *Invincible* is Jose Ryan Sescon's analogy to Pinoy Idols and Randy Jackson. Simon Cowell says he had "a horrible feeling that 'Brothers' would be a hit."

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Renaldo Lapuz
unplugged

Chatting with the former tricycle driver, now global 'Idol'

By Bayani San Diego Jr.
Photo courtesy of Idol World

INQUIRER EXCLUSIVE

BEFORE I MAKE IT TO THE HOLLYWOOD round of "American Idol," Intl 40-year-old Filipino-American Renaldo Lapuz has achieved the seemingly impossible: 15 minutes of global fame for a former tricycle driver in Montalan Village who later worked as janitor in Wadi Mart Resto.

Make that 15 minutes and counting.

The multidimension reality talent search devoted 11 minutes to Lapuz at its two-part season premiere last week.

For those confused, it had two separate interviews with him, clothing at one time different each. On live TV show, that's at least 16 minutes.

And the clock is ticking.

Inquirer Entertainment continued a phone interview taking with two other journalists...from Hong Kong and Malaysia...with Renaldo, who was in Tulsa, on Thursday.

Upon learning that he was being interviewed by a compatriot, Renaldo blurted out, "I love you!"

He proceeded to talk in Filipino—unmindful of the foreigners who were listening in. He would later shift to English.

Pilipino like Hong Kong-based reporter asked if it was the musical "Grease" that had inspired his love for music. (and prompted his look). the question was obviously lost in translation.

Lapuz instead invoked the movie "Ghostbusters" (which, he said, inspired him "Pump Whatever") and "The Lion King" (which, he noted, encouraged underdogs to persevere).

After the interview sessions, the 8M interviewers could only sigh, "Okay."

Earlier, on a Feb. move down, an off-camera producer asked Lapuz of his feelings after watching his audition on TV. The 39-Asia "church days" member quipped: "Even in the mainstream of happiness!"

The cheerleaded interviewer's dot response: "That's great."

Clearly Lapuz is more comfortable speaking in his native tongue, but his unique way with the English language has inspired not a few bloggers to give a posting binge.

A Netizen dubbed him "everyman's favorite Idol fan-kid."

Another blogger commented that Lapuz "symbolizes 99(Kiat thing to be. He's got more personality, sensitivity, and originality...bonus singing ability ... He's the new idol of inspiration."

Elizabeth web master Dave Brownagan, who put up www.renaldolapuz.com, recounted that "the homepage has had over 130,000 hits in week after its launch. It had around 20,000 in the first 24 hours."

Different versions of Lapuz's audition song, "We're Brothers Forever" have also been posted on the site. Brotherly and big-boy-to-dumbass-to remixes.

Brownagan related that "many companies ... have offering jobs. A car dealership and a fit sports team want to settle him."

Although Lapuz can't answer all the "official" site, Brownagan explained that proceeds from the Tshirts sold online would be given to the Big Brothers, Big Sisters organization.

As for those who are wondering about Lapuz's status—civil or otherwise—Lapuz declared unequivocally that he's "single and a permanent immigrant" to the U.S.

Others on E2

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Renaldo Lapuz, unplugged

When did you move to America?
Ang 8, 2004 Ito nandun pinsan ko.

What do you miss most about the Philippines?
Yung mga lumang kaibigan ko dyan sa Manila, sa Antipolo, dun ako lumaki kaya namis mga ito sila. Alaala ko ang kasama kami pano sa mga kumpanyan ng ang. Pati pala mga kalaro pa noong bata ako.

How old are you now?
I turned 45 last Dec. 30. Kaya po parang 36 years old lang.

What was your job in the Philippines?
Taxicab driver sa Mindanao Village, Quezon City. Tumaxi yoon dun June, 1992 to 2003. Ay, 11 years pala. Mahirap ako sa mall, e.

What's your job in the US?
Assistant po. Sa cleaning, maintenance. Kasi nagtrabaho rin ako bilang janitor sa Hong, from 1500 to 1999.

Dun sa US, nagtrabaho ako sa Waldorf in Reno. More than one year. Dyan ako pinalso manager. Sa dia, hindi ako nanagal, walong lamesa lang ako sa umaalagaan. Hong kasama sa Pennsylvania.

Employed Ba:
Employed Ba:

How close it feel that you're called the new 'William Hung'?
Actually, hanggang ngayon wala pa akong naririnig na official from Al management, na ako nga ang World Idol.

Marami akon ako sa pagnonggan ng mga tao pero pinaka-naghihirap ng mga tao hanggang hindi napapakinig mga ito.

Do you know who William Hung is?
Alinlo ko. Ipot yung kumanta ng "Ha Hung, Ha Hung." Nakakatuwa nga.

After three years in the US, he says he misses his friends in Marikina the most

What are your plans for your career?
Wala pa po akong nasi-sign na official. Kaya sa ngayon ay nagtrabaho ako sa Tri Nanna sa mga Los Angeles cafe. Also, pumalag ako sa TV Tonyong akong big time, talking ako kasi Total Pill of Tom Cruise.

What's your style of music?
Ballads. I like sa mandang.

Is "We're Brothers Forever" your only composition?
In 2000, I recorded 10 songs in the Philippines, in a recording studio near V. Luna. I translated two songs into English.

Who persuaded you to join AI?
My friend Chan Bernad and his cousin Archie Bernad. We're friends but we treat each other like brothers.

How do you feel about all the attention being given to you?
This is just the start of my dream. My singing career has just started.

Do you get excited by fans?
Yes. That's happening now. [Red] dor kasi sa sa dream, ako, edad ko. Young and old.

FROM THE GUY WHO BROUGHT YOU "THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT MARY"
BEN STILLER
THE HEARTBREAK KID
2ND WEEK

AT THE CINEMAS

GLORIETTA 1	1		2		3		4
GLORIETTA 4	1		2		3		
	4		5		6		7
GREENBELT 1	1	AMERICAN GANGSTER			2		
GREENBELT 3	1				2		
	3		4		5		
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1				2		
	3		4		5		
AYALA CENTER CEBU	1		2		3		4
MARKET! MARKET!	1				2		
	3		4		5		
TRINOMA	1		2		3		4
	5		6		7		

AT THE MALLS

Ayala Malls

glorietta	Promo until Manila January 28 to February 6
GREENBELT	WELCOME 2008 SALE January 11 to February 3
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	Alvin & The Chipmunks Live at Alabang Town Center January 26 & 27, 11am, 2pm & 6pm, Activity Center
AYALA CENTER CEBU	WELCOME 2008 SALE January 11 to February 3
MARKET! MARKET!	WELCOME 2008 SALE January 11 to February 3
Greenbelt Christmas	Rosemary Philippines presents TCHELICHEW REVIVAL January 11 to 27, 2008 For reservations, pls. call 887-0710 or visit www.rosemary-philippines.com
Ayala MUSEUM	OPENING OF PHILIPPINE ART Workshop by Jose Lee, Fernando Amorsolo, and Fernando Zobel For more info, pls. call 757-7117 ext 51 to 54 or email museum_inquiry@ayalamuseum.org
Tsi Nanna	WELCOME 2008 SALE January 11 to February 3

ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS MOVIE GUIDE

www.robinsonsmovieworld.com

GALLERIA

1 AMERICAN GANGSTER + THX
13:00 3:10 6:30 9:50

2 ALIEN vs. PREDATOR 2
1:10 3:30 5:50 7:40 9:40

3 P.S. I LOVE YOU
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

4 THE HEARTBREAK KID
12:40 3:00 5:20

5 JOHN RAMBO
12:00 2:05 5:20 7:30 9:50

6 NATIONAL TREASURE 2
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

7 I AM LEGEND
1:20 3:30 5:30 7:20 9:40

8 indieSine: CONDO
12:20 2:40 5:00 7:15 9:20

9 ALVIN and the CHIPMUNKS
1:15 3:25 5:35 7:45 10:05

10 THE HEARTBREAK KID
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

SNEAK PREVIEWS

January 28 to 29

- GALLERIA
- ERMITA
- METRO EAST
- NOVALICHES
- STA. ROSA
- DASMARINAS
- ANGELES
- STARMILLS
- BACOLOD

REGULAR Showing
Fridays only
MTRCB Rating : R18

ERMITA

1 SWEENEY TODD

2 indieSine: SING.

3 JOHN RAMBO

4 HEARTBREAK KID / DRAGON WARS

5 ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS

6 NATIONAL TREASURE 2

7 I AM LEGEND

8 AMERICAN GANGSTER

9 P.S. I LOVE YOU

10 ALIEN vs. PREDATOR 2

METRO EAST

1 P.S. I LOVE YOU
1:00 3:45 6:30 9:00

2 ALIEN vs. PREDATOR 2
11:50 2:10 4:30 6:50 9:10

3 JOHN RAMBO
12:20 2:30 4:40 6:50 9:00

4 AMERICAN GANGSTER
11:25 2:35 5:45 9:00

5 I AM LEGEND
12:00 2:15 4:25 6:40 9:00

6 SWEENEY TODD 12:20 3:30
ALVIN and the CHIPMUNKS 5:00 7:00 9:00

7 NATIONAL TREASURE 2
12:00 2:10 4:30 6:40 9:00

8 HEARTBREAK KID 12:00 2:10
DRAGON WARS 4:30 6:50 9:10

NOVALICHES

1 ALIEN vs. PREDATOR 2
2 RESERVED
3 JOHN RAMBO
4 NATIONAL TREASURE 2

5 DRAGON WARS 2
6 I AM LEGEND
7 AMERICAN GANGSTER
8 RESERVED

PIONEER

1 JOHN RAMBO
2 ALIEN vs. PREDATOR 2

3 P.S. I LOVE YOU
4 NATIONAL TREASURE 2

STA. ROSA

1 JOHN RAMBO
2 ALIEN vs. PREDATOR 2
3 RESERVED
4 I AM LEGEND
5 NATIONAL TREASURE 2

LIPA

1 BEE MOVIE
2 NATIONAL TREASURE 2
3 ELIZABETH
4 HOOD OF HORROR

DASMARINAS

1 ALIEN vs. PREDATOR 2
2 I AM LEGEND
3 JOHN RAMBO
4 NATIONAL TREASURE 2

IMUS

1 JOHN RAMBO
2 AMERICAN GANGSTER
3 NATIONAL TREASURE 2
4 ALIEN vs. PREDATOR 2

ANGELES

1 ALIEN vs. PREDATOR 2
2 NATIONAL TREASURE 2
3 THE HEARTBREAK KID
4 JOHN RAMBO

TARLAC

1 I AM LEGEND
2 NATIONAL TREASURE 2
3 DESPERADAS

STARMILLS

1 I AM LEGEND
2 DESPERADAS
3 NATIONAL TREASURE 2

4 THE HEARTBREAK KID
5 ALIEN vs. PREDATOR 2
6 JOHN RAMBO

BACOLOD

1 ALIEN vs. PREDATOR 2
2 NATIONAL TREASURE 2
3 BEE MOVIE / I AM LEGEND
4 DEATH PROOF
5 THE HEARTBREAK KID
6 CATACOMBS

ILOILO

1 ALIEN vs. PREDATOR 2
2 HOOD OF HORROR
3 JOHN RAMBO
4 NATIONAL TREASURE 2
5 THE HEARTBREAK KID
6 I AM LEGEND

a film by Martin Cabrera
From a maverick film group,
Breaking the Box Productions
NOW SHOWING at indieSine
January 23 to 29

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Watch on the big screen the ground-for-ground action of the elite superstars of WWE as they go head to head in the ring and compete for the most coveted title in wrestling!

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"The most potent tear-jerker since 'The Notebook'."
"The film prompts as many tears as those that ran down my cheeks. It delivers one of the year's best love stories."
"If you're looking for a great date movie, this is the one."
HILARY SWANK
GERARD BUTLER
P.S. I Love You

SOME THING HAS FOUND US
CLOVERFIELD
IN THEATERS JANUARY 30

SUNDAY
Turning Japanese

Ali de Leon

SMART Buddy
San Miguel Beer
Samahang Walang Katulad

MAROON 5
MARCH 5, 2008 • 8pm ARANETA COLISEUM
Tickets available at all SM Ticketnet outlets and ARANETA COLISEUM.
For inquiry please call 911-5555 or VIVA CONCERTS & EVENTS at 6876181 loc 820 & 745
TICKET PRICES
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PATRON B - P7,875
LOWER BOX - P5,250
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UPPER BOX B - P2,625
GA
VIVA

SUNDAY, JANUARY 27, 2008

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

ENTERTAINMENT

Pinay filmmaker scores slam dunk with winning docu in Slamdance

JOANNA Vasquez Arong's "New Lounge" is in competition at the "mind-stranglers" in the Sundance Film Festival.

PARK CITY, Utah—A FILIPINA surprise here is that the first documentary feature of a Filipino filmmaker, Joanna Vasquez Arong, is in competition at Slamdance, the rival alternative to the Sundance Film Festival.

We caught the second screening of Joanna's "New Lounge" and were hugely impressed. Adjudged first Documentary in the Brussels International Independent Film Festival last November and the Cinemanila International Film Festival last August, "New Lounge" is a confident work of a debuting filmmaker.

We were not quite prepared for this very fascinating, unflattering look at Beijing, circa 2003, wherein were operating hell and trying to be a world-class cosmopolitan city. The title refers to the name of the late trendy lounge bar in Beijing, where expats met and reveled in the pervading "new frontiers, anything is possible" spirit as the city transformed itself.

Willing subjects

Joanna, an expat herself, wisely zeroed in on two foreigners, Leonardo Emglar, a longer-than-life middle-aged Italian diarist, and Diliana Georgieva, a Bulgarian wannabe singer-actress, as her documentary subjects. The complete filmmaker was especially lucky to have a very willing subject in Leo, a colorful, amusing and intriguing man who led a decadent, booze-fueled lifestyle in a fancy Chinese home. She even frames Leo's interview with Joanna following Leo, Diliana, other expats and a hip-Chinese couple Henry Li and Sally Hu (this, around Beijing and even in some of their private moments, inside their homes. These subjects

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Rafael V. Ariglado

probably did not expect that they will be center stage with a fast-moving, unflinching look at their lives.

At the Q&A with the audience following the doc's well-received screening, the short Pinay stood tall—a giant. All of the questions enlivened the audience's surprised reaction to Joanna's with Leo. And she parried the questioners with the same smart, assured way that she held the camera before her subjects. Afterward, Joanna's new friends, whom she met for the first time in Sundance, including Filipino filmmakers Ramona Diaz and Marya Ignacio, roared her.

Before "New Lounge," Joanna made short documentaries in the Philippines. Before that, she toiled in various fields around the world, including finance (Goldman Sachs, Asia-Pacific region) and economic development (United Nations, Bangkok and Beijing). She pursued a Political Science/International Studies degree at Boston College (with a year exchange at the Institut d'Etudes Politiques, Paris) and a Master's Degree in Development and Environmental Studies at the London School of Economics.

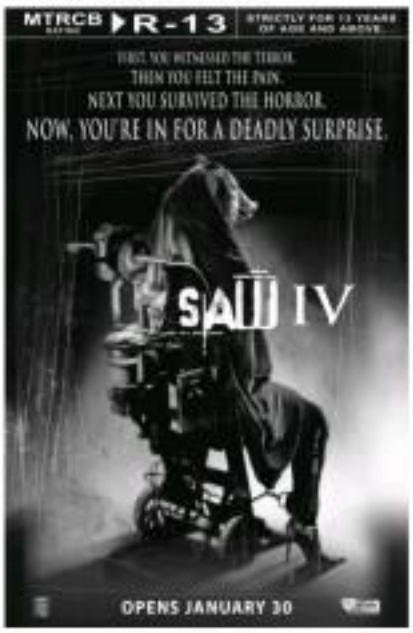
How did the idea for this feature doc come about?

When I moved to Beijing in September 2002, I had no specific plans except to pursue a different life from the fairly predictable one I had been leading in Manila. Beijing turned out to be more challenging than I had imagined. It then became quite surrealist half a year later when the SARS virus pandemic hit the city. The mass exodus of people, both foreigners and locals. But followed, left the streets eerily empty. During those days I discovered the world of New Lounge, one of the few bars that remained open during this period.

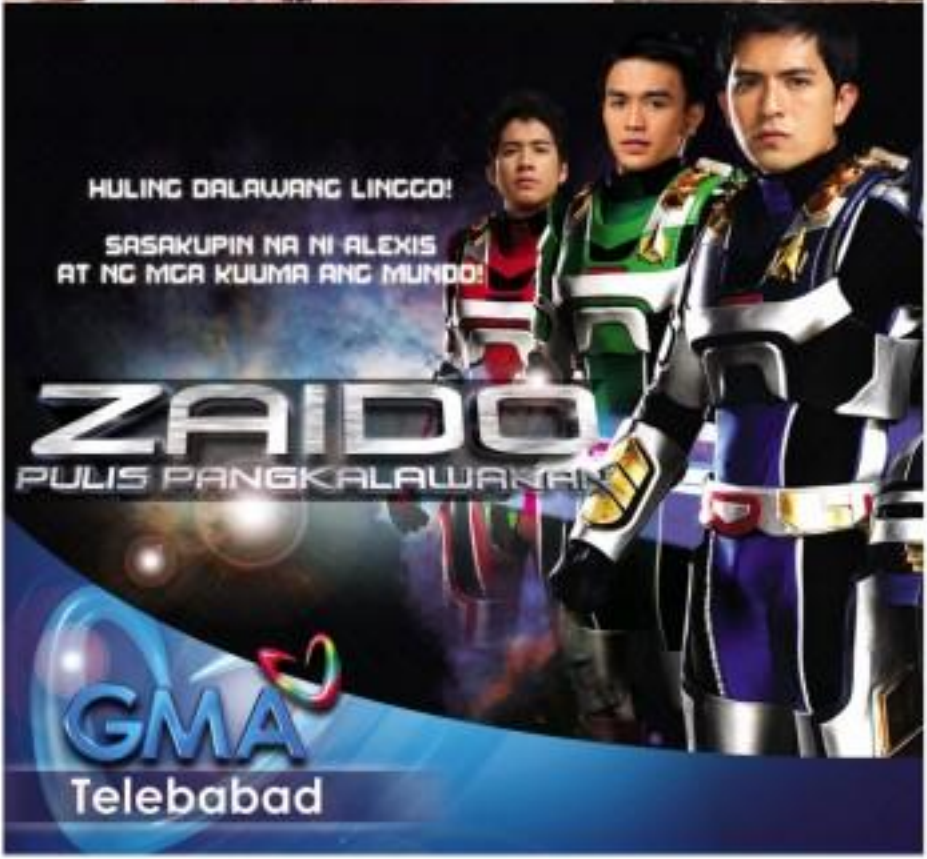
The many different characters who had decided to remain in Beijing and who were drawn to New Lounge fascinated me. It seemed as if you never really knew where they came from or where they were going. They all seemed to be living by their own rules and most appeared to be pursuing the life they had always wanted. The film, "New Lounge," began as a means to explore why different people were choosing a new life in Beijing, a city where answers are not always apparent as the city itself seems to redefine its identity.

And how did you end up in Beijing?

Ever since moving back to Asia and being based out of Singapore in 1996, I had thought I wanted to live in Beijing some day. After Beijing built its Manila bears 2008 to 2008, I decided to make the big move in 2002 after they announced that Beijing was the host to host the 2008 Olympics. I wanted to be in the center of the action and experience a new culture, and I



BITIN NA BITIN NA BA KAYO?



BUKAS IBIBIGAY NAMIN ANG GUSTO N'YO!

Pinay filmmaker scores slam dunk . . .

Love Month Movie Special!

Sexy Jessica Alba looks for true love in 'Good Luck Chuck'

Finally! Sexiest Woman in the World, Jessica Alba of FANTASTIC 4, stars as Cam, a cute and hopelessly charming penguin specialist in search of true love in the not new feel-good romantic comedy.

Enter Chuck (Dane Cook), cursed to help women find their true love with the exact guy they sleep with. After playing the field, Chuck realizes Cam is the girl of his dreams. Now, he has to break his heart before she can win hers.

Bring someone to the Sexiest Date Movie Ever!

Rated: R18+ Only due to Nudity and sexual content
Showing in selected theatres only due to R-18 rating

SNEAK PREVIEWS JAN 28-29
The romance begins Feb 8!

GREENBELT PERFORMANCES the City of Makati

FILA

Onstage, 2nd Flr., Greenbelt 1, Paseo de Roxas cor. Legaspi St., Makati City

For inquiries call 8870710 or 8919999

BOOKWORM Quinoza

On the menu: Angelina lips, Katie eyes, Keira cheeks

from page E4

breeding? (Oooh, lamb.)

● John Lloyd Cruz, mop mustache-dare? (May bagong proje

● Eatwong Autor sa Ashay at Jake Cuenca-nghahalikan! (Ha

Tall and tan

● Marian Oliveros, mainitan ng

● Banayan nina Judelson Ilustrisimo at Ricky Davao, sa sam ni Phillip Castalbo?

● Ano Agrandi, nagkakuwan kay Phillip Bautista? (Proud of the award

● Pinky Amador at Angel Locsin? Hi, the ice-bing rules ang sword of the words.)

● Tinito Hermosa? Di Dan Zeitchel sa akin?

● Rica, nanunding ang kay Pinky, na-okay na? (That's life.)

● Sarsi Angara, pumirma ng Take (a bookcontract.)

Yes, no

● Hart Evangelista, magpa-sorpresa ng birthday sa bagong bahay

● Richard, Marian, mag-check sa hotel? (For work?)

● Mga dilim at libations, dinadaing ni Iannadagi! (Inde na nga ba, e.)

(Nanay Boholst, Bohlol)

EASTWOOD CINEMAS

687-6963
GUARANTEED SEATS

1 RAMBO 4
2 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR 2
3 P.S. I LOVE YOU
AMERICAN GANGSTER

POWER PLANT CINEMAS

ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS 2
ALIENS VS. PREDATOR 2
P.S. I LOVE YOU
JOHN RAMBO
NATIONAL TREASURE 2
AMERICAN GANGSTER

All Ages Admitted

SHANG CINEPLEX

1 Alvin & the Chipmunks
2 Alien vs. Predator
3 Rambo 4
4 American Gangster
P.S. I Love You

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GREENHILLS CINEMAS

THEATRE MALL

PROMENADE

OPENS JANUARY 30

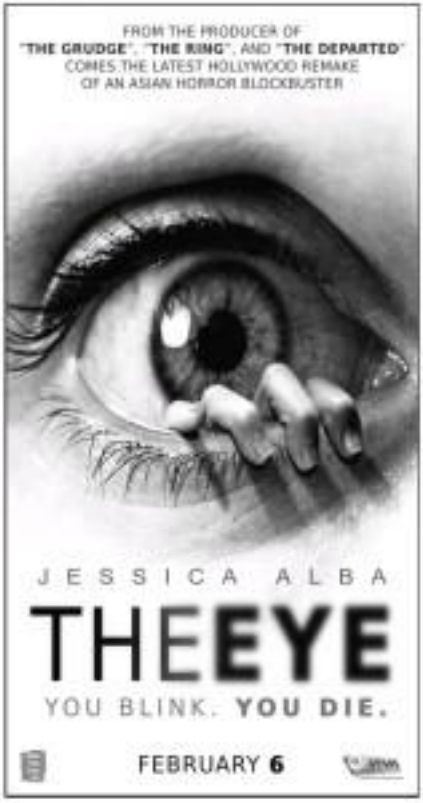
OPENS FEBRUARY 6

MMTA MOVIE GUIDE

NOW SHOWING

NOW SHOWING

NOW SHOWING!



On the menu: Angelina lips, Katie eyes, Keira cheeks

By the Inquirer Entertainment Staff

RUSHES

LOS ANGELES—EYES LIKE KATIE HOLMES, the sultry pout of Angelina Jolie and a body like Jessica Biel make the perfect woman—at least in the opinion of plastic surgery patients in Beverly Hills.

Those three specific attributes topped the list of the annual "Hollywood's Hottest Looks" survey released on Thursday by The Beverly Hills Institute of Aesthetic and Reconstructive Surgery.

According to doctors Richard Fleming and Toby Mayer, the most requested look-alike female nose was that of "Grey's Anatomy" star Katherine Heigl, while British actress Keira Knightley was tops in the cheek department, and Paris Hilton had the most sought-after skin.

The features most desired by men were Leonardo DiCaprio's nose, soccer player David Beckham's body and the blue eyes of the latest James Bond actor, Daniel Craig. George Clooney's chiseln and Matt Damon's lips also got top billing. *Reuters*

Quotes of the week

Wrap-up of entertainment quotes this week, from The Associated Press:

• "Working with Heath [Ledger] was one of the joyous joys of my life. He brought to the role of Ennis more than any of us could have imagined—a vibrancy, a truthfulness and his truth, and a vulnerability that made everyone who knew him love him. His death is heartbreaking." —Ang Lee, who directed the actor to an Oscar nomination in the 2005 film "Brokeback Mountain."

• "Actors need writers. You know scripts don't write themselves. The best because this part is so well-written." —Amy Ryan (Best Supporting Actress nominee for "Gone Baby Gone"), on why she won't attend the Oscars ceremony if writers are still on strike.

Go, go, go

LONDON—British soul singer Amy Winehouse has entered a rehab clinic, her record company, Universal Music Group, said on Thursday. The troubled 24-year-old also cancelled a scheduled performance at an awards ceremony in France this Saturday. *Reuters*

A whiff of '60s

If you're anywhere near Kris Aquino and suddenly catch a whiff of eucalyptus, lavender and ... wintergreen—a formula commonly associated with migraine, runny noses and/or aching muscles and joints—that's because she's the latest endorser of Vicks Vapor Oil.

The announcement suggests that, aside from their no-skin applications, the Vicks products may also be used for certain inhalations. We'll initially take this AVO therapy prescription to heart if, one day soon, we step into Kris' home and catch that familiar scent.

• • •

Top of the tabloids

The top shows his stories in local tabloids this week. (And today we are correct, if we are correct.)

Exes galore

• Ani Sihol at Polo Sandes, during tsugi-an, magkakabar na ngayon!

• KC (Concepcion) at DOE Lim (Courtenay), dinalaga na?

• KC, nilakwago ba ni/Derek Ramsay?

• Sharon (Cuneta) ayaw na ayaw ng ex-wife ng Lim para kay KC?! (Lumalon din ang mga ito.)

• At KC ang tapa-Abs na ninanais ni Stella (Stallone) na ayaw ni Richard)

• Sharon at Lim, di raw ang magkakabar!

Jealous Jom

• Shaina (Yabarra) pinay shopping si Jomari (Yllana) at Singapore!

• Jomari, saka na sabi ng Mental (Basa ito ... !)

• Jinx Manty at Jhay Mendiola pa rin at Inal? (And who was all that bikering about?)

• Gerald Anderson, isang young star ng Kapuso?! (Ako ang abentero, ako daw, young at mature!)

• Tim Gonzaga, wala sa pikon-ang pagpapahusad! (And we should not because ... !)

Brats ... cheats

• Nonstop Unlimited nasunog ang ngalit kaya mga nagiging DP ng ex's follower!

• Nonstop, super-reality. Aralog sa